UNIVERSITY OF LONDON
INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION
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READING RECOVERY AND CHILDREN'S WRITING: DEVELOPING THE WRITING OF CHILDREN WITH LITERACY LEARNING DIFFICULTIES

Thesis submitted for the degree of Ph.D.

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May, 1998

ABSTRACT

This thesis comprises a three-part longitudinal study of a one-to-one literacy intervention programme for children having difficulty reading and writing after one year at school. The programme, named Reading Recovery and founded by Marie Clay, consists of daily half-hour lessons taught by a teacher trained to diagnose and support children's problem-solving approaches to reading and writing.

Children's writing development in Reading Recovery is the main focus of this thesis. The first two sections of the thesis review writing development, the Reading Recovery programme, and scaffolding.

The third section presents a year long comparison of Reading Recovery children's writing with the writing from a comparison group of children who scored equally low on a battery of tests but who did not receive tutoring. Writing samples from classroom activities were collected from children in both groups, divided into four phases through the year and were scored on a scale by two raters. Statistical analyses showed improved performance by children in Reading Recovery on five dimensions of writing criteria with six levels of attainment. This development emerged in the latter part of the year and indicates that Reading Recovery children successfully transfer their increasing ability and independence to other writing events where the Reading Recovery teacher is not present to provide intensive support.

This section also includes the second empirical study, an investigation into children's views on literacy. An interview on writing and reading was conducted with children in both groups at the end of the longitudinal

studies. Findings indicated a greater metalinguistic awareness and level of sophistication of word awareness and analysis in the Reading Recovery children's approach to print.

The fourth section of the thesis explores the interactive structure of Reading Recovery lessons. Clay claims the programme is consistent with the principles of Vygotsky's theory on the acquisition of cultural tools. More specifically Clay and Cazden (1990) have shown how the features of Reading Recovery lessons exemplify the scaffolding of learning based on assessment of each child's current reading strategies and techniques for moving the child towards independence in writing and reading. In this year-long observation, Reading Recovery lessons were studied using a sample of 17 children taught by seven trained teachers. The writing episodes of the lessons were qualitatively analysed. Teacher utterances were categorised and text-generation topics and styles, talk-cycles and rehearsal routines were identified. These are discussed in the light of the scaffolding literature. Although the writing episodes conformed to many aspects of scaffolding, some reconceptualisation is necessary to take account of the dynamic nature of literacy learning in contrast with scaffolding within brief, experimental tasks.

In the light of the findings from the three studies and drawing them together, teaching and learning strategies are discussed, the importance of the process of learning to write is emphasised and recommendations for further research are made.

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to acknowledge the intellectual and emotional support given to me by various individuals, which has sustained me throughout the course of this PhD.

In particular I am especially grateful to the following:

My supervisor Professor Sylva whose careful and constant support has guided me through the years. Jane Hurry and Ian Plewis for their timely advice throughout the duration of my research endeavours. Angela Hobsbaum, to whom I am particularly grateful, for her thorough, intensive and expert advice when I was faced with great difficulties.

The children and teachers with whom I came into regular contact during the years and who graciously permitted my presence in their lessons.

The head teacher at the Infant school in which I worked, for her unfailing readiness to allow me to chop and change from part-time to full-time work and still retain my management post, while in pursuit of this PhD.

Paul, for his eternal patience and for believing in me.

My God, in whom all things are possible, whose I am and whom I serve; for provision of sustenance and my daily bread

PREFACE

ORIGINS OF THE STUDY

The origins of this thesis are linked to my professional experience of teaching and learning in primary classrooms. Over the past twelve years my burgeoning interest in children's literacy development has been constantly growing and has been a major focus of my critical reflective practice. While conducting research on literacy in the early years in the United States, I was privileged to meet with Marie Clay, the founder of Reading Recovery. The opportunity to observe Reading Recovery in practice arose and my nascent interest was sparked. At the time I did not fully understand the programme that was being introduced.

On my return to England, I was delighted to find Marie Clay in residence at the London University and we again made our acquaintance. In 1995 I paid a short visit to New Zealand, the 'birthplace' of Reading Recovery. That I have taken on an investigation of Reading Recovery is somewhat of a mystery to me. My field of knowledge and experience is in creating literacy contexts for excellence in teaching and learning in classroom situations. Reading Recovery is concerned with the child who experiences literacy learning difficulties and who receives one-to-one tutoring. However, in embarking on such a study I am conscious of the implication that awarenesses drawn from investigating such a programme, must have some bearing on good classroom practice. By looking thoroughly and systematically at the teaching and learning in Reading Recovery, we can begin to consider aspects of classroom practice and how this can best be informed by lessons from the Reading Recovery programme.

PART I EARLY LITERACY

INTRODUCTION

This thesis sits within the domain of research on early literacy development. Willinsky (1990), referring to a way forward in literacy research and practice, urges for studies which seek greater integration between literacy events. He cites the Reading Recovery tutorial programme as a demonstration of the ways in which children can be taught to make connections between their writing and reading.

This thesis investigates components of the Reading Recovery programme which was introduced in this country in 1992 from New Zealand. Reading Recovery targets six-year old children experiencing difficulties in literacy after one year in school. It enables specially trained teachers to diagnose reading difficulties. Teachers provide daily one-to-one support in reading and writing to enable the children to catch up with their peers.

The research aims are threefold:

1. To investigate the effectiveness of Reading Recovery on young children's writing as manifested in their classroom writing over a year long period. Further, to compare the development in writing of Reading Recovery children with a comparison group of non-tutored children with similar levels of literacy attainment. The purpose of this is to extend research on the effectiveness of this particular tutorial programme to writing, and to contribute to the field of literacy research on writing. This is important because most research on Reading Recovery has focussed on reading.

2. To explore and compare Reading Recovery and non-tutored children's understandings of the writing and reading process. Further, to

examine the views of children in Reading Recovery on the lessons they have experienced. This is important as children's views will add to our understanding of their metacognitions about literacy development.

3. To explore features of the interaction between child, text and teacher during Reading Recovery lessons in order to identify the strategies used and developed over time. This part aims to fill in the gap between the large number of pre and post outcome studies in this field and qualitative accounts of practice, by making an academic investigation into the processes that guide the lesson, which may or may not be the way in which the tutorial was originally conceived.

The empirical work was conducted in three main parts:

A. A longitudinal comparative study of Reading Recovery and non-tutored children's independent writing.
B. An investigation of children's views of writing and reading in Reading Recovery and non-tutored groups using a structured interview.
C. A year-long observational study of Reading Recovery lessons and qualitative analysis of the writing component of these lessons in order to:-

   i) identify the child's role in the writing lesson
   ii) examine the role of talk as mediator
   iii) investigate features of interaction between child, text and teacher
   iv) explore changes in the interactive process over time in the programme

Parts one and two enable the researcher to investigate the effectiveness of the tutorial programme on children's writing development and on their understandings of literacy. Part three aims at enhancing our understandings of the instructional model in Reading Recovery lessons.

This thesis thus incorporates literature reviews of the development of young children's writing, the tutorial situation in Reading Recovery and a discussion of the teaching and learning process termed 'scaffolding'.

CHAPTER ONE

A STUDY OF READING RECOVERY AND EARLY LITERACY: PLAN OF THE THESIS

1.1 Background to the Study

Interest in learning to read and write has generated volumes of accumulated research (Morris, 1973; Wray & Medwell, 1991). The issue of early literacy development and approaches to teaching reading and writing in the early years of schooling commands a wealth of research, and continues to generate ongoing critical debates, spanning the educational and psychological literature (Goodman, 1990). It is necessary therefore to be selective in extracting appropriate areas for discussion. The literature reviews are outlined here.

In order to conduct a study of a tutorial programme such as Reading Recovery, it is important to discuss not only the content of the tutorial and the related research , but also the theoretical issues embedded within such a literacy programme, the assumptions behind the practice and how it fits into the field of writing and reading development.

The emphasis in this thesis is on children's writing development rather than reading and it is not expedient to delve into the vast range of reading research. Obviously the classic studies (e.g., Bradley & Bryant, 1985; Ehri, 1976; Tunmer, Pratt & Herriman, 1984) which have permeated across the literature and which give cause for vigorous debate, raise relevant issues.

As Beard and Oakhill (1995) maintain "...the sociological and psychological perspectives on literacy may need to be reconciled or even integrated in some way, according to the conceptual or methodological needs of different investigations" (p. 72).

There already exist major multiple reviews of the literature on reading and of writing (eg. Stanovich, 1980; Chall, 1983; Anderson, 1985; Adams, 1990). A chapter on writing development forms part of this thesis for several reasons. Most importantly Reading Recovery is based on what competent readers and writers do. The research discussed provides a perspective of the processes involved in learning to write. It also provides a means for understanding the basis of Reading Recovery by which to interpret and analyse observational data. Such data can be discussed in various lights, and it is essential therefore, to outline the knowledge perspective which governs the development of new understandings. Ultimately, literacy must be viewed as a psychological, linguistic and social process, rather than regarded solely in one domain (Cazden, 1982).

A review of the literature therefore necessitates several components. Chapter Two provides a brief overview of writing research in order to locate Reading Recovery in a framed and sustained analysis and a model of writing appropriate to the programme is discussed. Chapter Three presents a critical review of research on Reading Recovery. The literature review is then extended in Chapter Four to include a focussed discussion of the nature of interaction in literacy learning. This provides a comprehensive review of the literature relevant to the issues to be researched in Reading Recovery. Chapters presenting the empirical work are outlined at the end of this chapter.

1.2 Overview of Methodology Employed.

The purpose of this section is to outline briefly the approaches to empirical research adopted in this thesis. Several methodologies were used in a longitudinal study. Writing products were collected from a Reading Recovery and comparison group over a year-long period. Reading Recovery lessons were observed, audio-taped and transcribed during the same year. Structured interviews were conducted with children from both groups towards the end of the longitudinal study.

All research methods imply a theoretical stance which governs data collection and analysis. The distinction between quantitative and qualitative research is most commonly drawn at the level of method of data collection and the form in which data are recorded and analysed. Willinsky (1990) recommends elaborating the possibilities of approaches to research. He suggests that Pinnell's (1989) work on Reading Recovery lessons serves to illustrate the combination of quantitative and qualitative methods and states that "the investigator needs to assess the current state of the field to determine what factors in literacy might most helpfully be examined, what populations need to be involved...(and) what innovations can be advanced in both teaching and research methods" (p. 234). While Bogdan and Biklen (1992) highlight the tensions between the two approaches and their underlying assumptions, it was useful to employ elements of both methodologies in order to address appropriately the research questions.

The methods used in this study are semi-structured interview, product sampling and observation in the field for the purpose of elucidation of the writing process and contextual detail. This triangulation of data and methods, the use of a variety of data sources and multiple methods to study a phenomenon (Denzin, 1978), was employed in order to research the products of children's writing and the process by which they learn to write

in a one-to-one setting. This logic of triangulation operates as a methodological device of combination. However, it is important to clarify the purpose of adopting such triangulation because application of a range of methodologies necessitates appropriateness and rigour (Burgess, 1984; Hannon, 1989).

The use of qualitative approaches to enhance or flesh out quantitative findings is a purpose often cited (Denzin, 1970; Patton, 1990). However, it must also be recognised that operation on two levels, micro and macro, can be complementary in nature (Brannen, 1992). Thus, qualitative data collection and analysis can be used in conjunction with quantitative methods, based on the same research but in its own right and not just as a means of qualifying, supporting or explaining quantitative findings; to explore rather than to confirm. This was the purpose of observing Reading Recovery lessons.

Cohen and Manion (1980) point out that triangulation techniques, while often subscribed to in principle, are rarely adhered to in practice. While Patton (1990) regards triangulation as an important means of strengthening a research design, Brannen (1992) queries the possibility and desirability of pure triangulation. In this respect the research methods used in this thesis are best described as an integration of approaches; they do not triangulate data around the same pole. Both quantitative and qualitative methodologies are used for different parts of the investigation, i.e. multiple operationism rather than triangulation.

In this thesis the conjoining of diverse methodologies constitutes separate but linked studies which are distinct from each other at stages of the research process and which focus on aspects of young children's writing development. Such eclecticism allows for the data collection and analysis of product and process factors using appropriate means for investigating

the research questions. In turn, the nature of the research questions demands an appropriate methodological stance.

The specific methodologies adopted in this thesis are briefly identified here. In each study presented, the particular method used is amplified. The nature of the interview used in this research was carefully tailored for use with young children. Patton (1990) defines three variations in qualitative interviewing. These are informal conversational, general interview guide and structured open-ended interviews. In this study the use of a structured interview was employed with a mix of open-ended and closed questions. This was intended to support the context of child interviews by minimising interviewer effects and variation, aiming at systematic and reliable data collection, structured organisation of data and being highly focused in order to make optimum use of time.

Schrader (1990) applied a similar triangulation of data collection to that presented in this thesis, employing the use of informal interview, recorded observational field notes plus audio-taped transcriptions and the collection of written products to document writing abilities. She justifies the requirement of adopting a naturalisitic enquiry paradigm (Lincoln and Guba, 1985) because "literacy is an holistic, social and problem-solving process" (p. 12) and therefore such enquiry permits observation into the writing process as it occurs. Mehan's (1979) procedures for accounting for data indicate that presentation of data should not be in reduced or tabulated forms of frequency counts without recourse to the inclusion of organised verbatim scripts as evidence of findings, as presented in part of this thesis.

This thesis then integrates three different approaches for the purpose of studying children's literacy development. The empirical work is presented as follows. Chapter Five compares the writing development of children in

Reading Recovery with that of their peers in a comparison group. This is done by collection of product data on a longitudinal basis followed by statistical analysis. Chapter Six employs an interview strategy to gain insight into understandings of writing and reading in children who have received Reading Recovery and those who have not. Chapters Seven and Eight explore the interactive writing process of children in the Reading Recovery tutorial using observational methodology and qualitative analysis. Chapter Nine draws the three investigations together.

CHAPTER TWO

ASPECTS OF CHILDREN'S WRITING DEVELOPMENT

2.1 Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to discuss young children's learning of writing in order to provide a background to the principles which contributed to the development of the Reading Recovery programme at the time this research was conducted. It includes a brief discussion of writing and reading. The empirical research in this thesis is concerned with children's writing. A review of writing development and writing models is therefore presented. This provides the reader with information necessary for understanding the procedures and practices of Reading Recovery which are reviewed in Chapter Three.

In presenting her Reading Recovery programme, Clay (1985) discusses how the procedures are generated from observations of competent writers and readers and from regular classroom practice. The OFSTED report *'Reading Recovery in New Zealand'* (1993) states that "in New Zealand, Reading Recovery is offered in the context of an education system which clearly gives very high priority to securing initial literacy" (p.4). Hence, this chapter provides an overview of pertinent literature on aspects of children's writing, knowledge of which, together with that of reading acquisition, forms the basis for decision making in Reading Recovery instruction (Lyons, Pinnell and DeFord, 1993).

2.2 Overview of Research on Writing and Reading

The acquisition of writing and reading in young children represents very complex sets of learning and there are many competing theories and debates about what is being learned and how that learning can best be facilitated. Understandings of children's early literacy development and implications for practice are found in a wide expanse of educational and psychological research.

The literature encompasses rich anecdotal accounts (e.g., Bissex, 1980), case studies (e.g., Clay, 1975; Shickedanz, 1988), ethnographic investigations (e.g., Heath, 1982; Cochran-Smith, 1984; Harste, Woodward and Burke, 1984) and experimental research (e.g., Mason, 1980; Tunmer, Pratt & Herriman , 1984; Bryant & Bradley, 1985; Tolchinsky-Landsmann & Levin, 1985; Ehri, 1989). Pinsent (1990) argues that as thinking about writing, reading and oracy has developed over the past twenty years, it attained its highest profile in the teaching approach termed emergent literacy. This umbrella label embraces research which provides a model of a young active learner together with the necessary teaching interventions required to develop and illuminate learning of the phonology, orthography, syntax and semantics of written language for both writing and reading. There are numerous comprehensive reviews of this early literacy research (Mason & Allen, 1986; Teale, 1987; Hancock, 1990; McLane & McNamee, 1990). However, in the light of current educational practice, this terminology is somewhat outmoded. Nevertheless, research in this area did contribute to and has been associated with elements of the Reading Recovery programme in recent years. Relating this directly to the Reading Recovery programme, Pinnell, DeFord and Lyons (1988) and Lyons, Pinnell and DeFord (1993) preface an account of their Reading Recovery research with a summary of emergent literacy. Clay (1991) discusses emergent

literacy in respect of literacy before schooling (pp. 27-31) and in the first year at school (pp. 93-112).

This post-1980's early literacy research must be viewed in its historical context. Previously, reading and writing research were generally separate disciplines which represented them as dichotomised areas of learning. Dobson (1989) states that there is a paucity of research exploring the interdependent nature of the two processes. Irwin and Doyle (1992) provide a review of the research into reading and writing connections. Some studies approach this with caution. Bryant and Bradley (1980) showed that while early writing and reading may be interrelated, the process can be dissociated. Research reported by Galda and Pelligrini (1988) suggests that children's early reading and writing may not be interdependent.

However, studies conducted by Ehri (1989) and Ehri and Wilce (1987) indicate reciprocity between learning to write and reading acquisition. The authors conclude that an interactive model best described their data. Similarly, Frith (1985) has suggested a developmental framework that encompasses both reading and writing development. Frith argues both that literacy development should be viewed as a whole, and that reading and writing development proceed out of step. Her model characterises the shifting and overlapping relationship between reading and writing development.

The significance of this research and other research cited earlier, is that it supported the mutuality of reading and writing in practice. In previous teaching approaches they had been dealt with as very separate processes (Taylor, 1989).

2.3 Contexts for Early Literacy Research

Early literacy research has broadened its boundaries and has "tended to make use of descriptive methodologies using naturalistic observation" (Sulzby & Teale, 1991, p. 729). Research extended into the domain of the home environment as a means of exploring and understanding the nature and importance of children's pre-school competencies (e.g., Haussler, 1985; Wells, 1986). Other studies have focused on specific literacy events and formulated frameworks by which to make sense of the developing knowledge and skills exhibited by young children prior to schooling. These include research seeking to identify specific behaviours of parent-child dyads engaged in story reading events that may contribute to literacy learning (see Peters, 1991, 1993 for a review of the literature). Features of interactive dialogues in these events, characterised by routines or cycles relevant to this thesis (such as semantic contingency and the process of scaffolding) were identified by Ninio and Bruner (1978) and Snow (1983). Other empirical works and critical discussion have redressed the balance of early literacy research from home to school, providing an interactionist perspective of young children's literacy learning (e.g., Stanovich, 1980; Reid, 1990; Beard & Oakhill, 1995). Drawing together understandings from this body of research, Lyons, Pinnell and DeFord (1993) state that "the very basis of what occurs in instructional conversations within the writing component in Reading Recovery, the writing routine itself and the instructional moves the teacher and child make, is a more formalised use of the assisted conversations held between children and caregivers. Within these writing lessons, the teacher seeks to weave an instructional programme around what the children know and extend that knowledge base in order to allow them to learn with their peers, to learn more about writing through classroom encounters with reading and writing" (p.101).

In summary, this diverse body of research on early literacy indicates that many children acquire a wealth of knowledge about print prior to formal schooling. Young children may have the opportunity to learn about many aspects of print through interaction in purposeful literacy events. For example, through early reading and writing experiences they begin to apply their knowledge of how a story works or incorporate elements of the alphabetic system into their exploratory writing. The evidence suggests that children begin actively to develop insights about the functions of written language and notions about the various components of written language (graphophonic, semantic, syntactic, phonetic, pragmatic). Such learning in young children subsequently "demands provision and intervention" (Hall, 1987, p. 81). Provision for teaching and learning in the classroom may be eclectic or place different emphases on the components of written language. Clay (1994) maintains that "Reading Recovery has no comment to make on these different approaches to classroom instruction...Most children do NOT require these detailed, meticulous and special Reading Recovery procedures or any modification of them. They will learn more pleasurably without them" (p.122-123).

2.4 Theoretical Perspectives

The theoretical underpinnings of the empirical research in early literacy appear to be guided by two major perspectives. One is derived from a Piagetian constructivist stance, in which the child's active construction of literacy is postulated (specifically, see Goodman, 1990). The work by Ferreiro and Teberosky (1979) is much influenced by Piaget and based on a view of children as theory-builders and theory-refiners. The other dominant view seeks inspiration from reappraisals of Vygotsky's work which re-emphasises the social context and social interaction as a tool for explaining children's learning (or internalising) of literacy knowledge (Sulzby, 1986). Emphasis on the social characteristics of learning has

major implications for the teaching of literacy (Wray & Medwell, 1991). Wells (1990) succinctly encompasses these two perspectives: "The picture of literacy development that emerges from these studies is thus very much in accord with current theories of early learning...which emphasise both the active and constructive nature of the child's intellectual development and its social basis" (p. 15). This is consistent with Reading Recovery philosophy and practice.

The next two sections briefly focus on reading and writing separately. This is then narrowed to a critique of writing development and models of writing, one of which is then directly related to Reading Recovery.

2.5 Reading

Recently, most providers for children's early literacy development recognise the need to teach for all available print cues within a supportive and meaningful context (DfEE, 1997). This must be done in conjunction with direct teaching of the functions, syntax and phonological principles of the alphabetic system, as most recently exemplified in practice in the form of a daily Literacy Hour (DfEE, 1997). The writing system of English is, of course, alphabetic. But it is a complex orthography. Contemporary research that informs us about how children learn maps onto effective teaching approaches. Research cited earlier, has promoted recognition of the role of syntactic and semantic cues in the multi-level process of reading (Barrs & Thomas, 1991). More recently, investigators have focused their attention on the graphophonic cueing system. Informative studies about children's ability to segment spoken language has dominated reading research in the UK and the United States in recent years.

An extensive review of the role of phonics in early literacy instruction was carried out by Adams (1990) for the American Department of Education.

It relied substantially on work by Chall (1967) and Pflaum et al (1980). Adams concluded that the evidence for the importance of systematic phonics teaching was overwhelming. More recent understandings about children's learning of the alphabetic nature of the English writing system can be classified from examples of this research. Nicholson (1991) and Stanovich (1987; 1991) showed that early readers read print better in familiar context than outside of such context. Secondly, a recurrent theme in research studies on phonological awareness, is that young children are competent at analysing spoken words into onset and rimes but not into phonemes (Liberman et al, 1974; Goswami & Bryant, 1990; Bryant, 1993). Bryant, one of the most prolific researchers in this area, cites a large body of experimental evidence on preliterate children's explicit judgements about phonemes. He concludes that "children begin to break words up into constituent phonemes as a result of learning to read" (1993, p. 93). Clay (1991) also argues that the ability to manipulate graphophonemic representations develops in interaction with literacy learning and as an outcome of learning to read.

Thirdly, young beginning readers are able to make analogies between familiar and unfamiliar print words at the onset-rime level rather than at phonemic level (Ehri, 1975; Goswami, 1986, 1988; Moustafa, 1997). The implications for instruction in the alphabetic principle, are that it ought to incorporate the teaching of letter-onset and letter-rime correspondences as well as graphophonemic correspondences where appropriate (Moustafa, 1997). The ability to perceive patterns of sounds and relate them to patterns of letters does appear to be an essential element of learning to read. Thus, teaching children to break down words into chunks by a process of analysis may be an effective additional approach to that which expects them to build up words from individual letters by a process of synthesis. A recognition of the wide range of information and knowledge children need to access and operate on in order to learn to read, ought to

guard against excessive polarisation. Such instruction of phonological information can be taught explicitly, systematically and extensively within a context which foregrounds the role of the whole text in learning to read.

In the Reading Recovery context, Clay (1985) asks teachers to think about three kinds of cueing systems, namely meaning, syntax and visual (phonological) information. Furthermore, Clay emphasises the importance of strategies in orchestrating these multiple cues in order to make sense of print. Clay's (1991) definition of reading upholds that it is "a message-gaining, problem-solving activity that increases in power and flexibility the more it is practised" (p. 6). Thus, knowledge of the alphabetic system in terms of phonological awareness of syllables, phonemes and onset and rime (intra-syllabic units) as a network of information (Goswami & Bryant, 1990), and of the syntax and other elements of written language, all need to be activated in order that a reader builds systems of understanding that make up what Clay has called a "*self-extending system*".

2.6 Writing

2.6.1 Introduction

One lacuna in literacy research has been studies on the process of learning to write. Cooper and Odell (1978) issued a plea for a "...period of vigorous research on written discourse and composing process" (p. xi). Beard (1984) stated that "reading has tended to receive a good deal more attention than writing" (p. 2). Writing research is frequently missed or its status jeopardised as it is included within texts displaying titles devoted to reading, such as Pinnell and McGarrier's contribution entitled '*Interactive Writing* ' in Hiebert and Taylor's (1994) book entitled, '*Getting Reading Right from the Start*', and Papoulia-Tzelepi's study '*Making Sense of*

Writing ' in a book called '*Emergent and Developing Reading*' (Owens & Pumfrey, 1995). In 1975, nearly twenty years previously, the Bullock Report (DES) devoted five chapters to reading and one to writing. Prior to the 1980's the literature on writing focused on older children and was concerned with the product of a text, which is more accessible than the underpinning psychological processes (Bean & Wagstaff, 1991). Since 1980 more research has been reported in this area (Cummings, 1989; Kinmont, 1990).

This chapter briefly outlines relevant research on children's early writing development. Then, writing models are critically discussed and a model of writing as relevant to both classroom practice and the Reading Recovery programme is outlined in order to service understanding of the lesson procedures explained in Chapter Three.

2.6.2 Research on Children's Writing

The range of research on children's writing can be classified as follows. National surveys conducted (H.M.I., 1978, 1982; Galton et al (1980); Southgate, Arnold & Johnson, 1981) focused on writing output and types of behaviour in a range of schools and L.E.A.s. Early anecdotal studies looked at children in the home (Bissex, 1980; Shickedanz, 1990) while other observational studies highlighted the contribution of interaction to children's writing development (e.g., Heath, 1983; Goodnow, 1977; Gundlach, McLane, Stott & McNamee, 1985). A parallel branch of descriptive studies focused on children's independent writing behaviours in early years school settings (Clay, 1975; Ferreiro & Teberosky, 1983; Harste, Woodward & Burke, 1984; Sulzby, 1985; Dyson, 1985, 1988). Within these, individual studies focused on distinctive aspects of children's writing. For example, Ferreiro and Teberosky's (1979) large and complex study showed how young children develop theories about the relation of

print to spoken language and how they move through a succession of stages before they appreciate that there is a one-to-one correspondence between graphic and sound segments. In a different mode, Dyson's studies focused on the role of oral language in writing development.

Clay's (1975) influential book was one of the first to document and describe children's early writing behaviours which manifest their explorations of concepts about print. Temple, Nathan and Burris (1982) provide a comprehensive exploration of critical issues in the development of the writing process. They define similar principles to Clay and outline specific stages of spelling development from prephonemic to standard (Gentry, 1982, cited in Temple, Nathan & Burris). These stages are activated through children's writing attempts involving working hypotheses, strategies and spelling approximations. Research appears inconclusive as to whether there is an invariant developmental sequence in children's approaches to writing; Clay (1975), Graves (1983) and Sulzby (1986) claim the contrary. However, much of the research illustrates a basic outline of developmental stages (not age related) as exemplified in the work of Temple, Nathan and Burris (1982) and Ferreiro and Teberosky (1982).

Many studies in this vein demonstrate the process of children's independent writing behaviours, but again focus largely on the products in order to document this. Research by Henderson and Beers (1980), Ferreiro and Teberosky (1983), Nicholls et al (1989) and Saracho (1990) clearly describe the journey of children's independent writing attempts from scribble to symbol-sound approximations to standard orthography. The importance of such research was not the recognition that children were learning about writing earlier, which might imply pushing back the boundaries of teaching writing to pre-school environments, but that it raised radically different notions about the onset of literacy.

In contrast, Sulzby (1996) argues that children move back and forth across forms rather than progressing through the sequences described. Building on this, Harste, Woodward and Burke (1984) did not find evidence to support a defined, developmental sequence. Their research was conducted over several years with three to six year old children from a variety of ethnic and social backgrounds. The authors characterised children's writing in terms of its organisation, intentionality, generativeness and risk taking. The essence of their research, and similar studies for reading, is that the independent literacy acts of young children are regarded as part of the development of learning to write in standard print.

In the light of such research, the concept of a transition from independent literacy attempts to conventional literacy (Kamberellis, 1992) does not appear to be conducive to an understanding of children's writing development as it claims that teaching writing can begin *after* children have had multiple early writing experiences. The research cited here suggests an ongoing process rather than a preparation period. The relevant issue for this thesis is *how* teachers engage children in direct teaching in order to teach aspects of phonological awareness, letter formation and so on.

2.6.3 Models of Writing Development

Models of writing are diverse and not easily classified. This is not an exhaustive review as many bear little relation to the empirical work in this study. Most models of writing are developed from looking only at complete texts. Rarely is account taken of the way in which the writing was produced. Some classifications can be proposed. Models assess writing according to various criteria such as functional terms (Kinneavy, 1971; Britton, 1975); language structure (Harpin, 1976; Wilkinson et al, 1980); and categories of text (Moffett, 1968). Beard (1984) provides a useful

discussion of these. Other models categorise stages of types of writing (Bereiter, 1980) and levels of composition and performance (Nicholls et al, 1989).

Bereiter's (1980) model uses an 'applied cognitive-developmental' framework in setting out five stages of writing (namely, associative-performative-communicative-unified-epistemic) by which the focus weaves from process to product and in reverse. This is a stage-like model that seems to categorise types of writing or aims. However, it is not concerned with very early explorations of writing and the development of print awareness in novice writers.

The writing model presented by Nicholls et al (1989) is based on data collected using an observation schedule. They elect to use the term 'level' rather than stage, to describe developmental progression. While the authors dovetail their model with a discussion of Bereiter's, this model really considers what is involved in writing competence for the first of Bereiter's proposed stages.

A classic but important distinction in writing models is that made between the composition and transcription aspects of writing. Are these two processes fused in early literacy or is composition disrupted by concerns about the transcriptional aspects? Kroll's (1981) model proposes four discrete phases in writing acquisition:

1. Preparation - children learn the basic skills of handwriting and spelling
2. Consolidation - children are able to write from speech
3. Differentiation - writing becomes formally differentiated from speech once the basic skills are mastered

4. Integration - children gain control over the use of voice and tone in written language

However, in an historical context, this model was defined prior to the work of Ferreiro and Teberosky (1983) which challenges these discrete stages.

Subsequent research on how children learn to write and current educational practice may not reflect the separation in phases one and two. The transcriptional or secretarial aspects of writing are taught both while children are engaged in producing connected text in a multiplicity of contexts and also through direct teaching in lessons attending to specific elements of the alphabetic script. Handwriting, for example, is a separate motor skill unrelated to the cognitive process of writing. Sassoon's (1990, 1993) work emphasises the importance of training in the movement of basic letters rather than adherence to a particular style of letter formation. She stresses giving praise for writing that moves correctly and not just for neat presentation. Reading Recovery guidelines do not give specific teaching models for handwriting (other than ensuring individual letters are correctly formed), but in practice Reading Recovery teachers do attend to features of handwriting and neatness whilst engaged in the process of writing a sentence with the child. Cripps and Cox (1996) articulate this link between children's development in spelling and handwriting. They maintain that in order to support children's spelling development and help them acquire an efficient handwriting style, teachers can focus on both aspects in tandem.

In contrast to Kroll, a more contemporary model is presented by Nicholls et al (1989). They proposed four levels of composition (orientation towards writing; early text writing; initial independent writing; associative writing) and paralleled this with how the composing level is manifest in performance (i.e. from scribble through to use of some conventional letters;

from simple texts to writing that is fairly accurate). The researchers stress the integration of composing and performing at each level. As attention to performing decreases or is more automated, so attention to composition increases, (for more detail see Nicholls et al, 1989, pp. 91 - 100). This model, derived from observation studies, is akin to practice in the writing episode of the Reading Recovery lesson over time spent in the programme. Similarly, D'Arcy's (1989) model distinguishes between interpretations of writing: product, process, code and medium. She argues that writing involves all these elements which must interact with each other to a greater or lesser degree at different points in learning to write. She maintains that over emphasis on one element, e.g. code (spelling, grammar), could be deleterious in the early years of schooling.

It can be argued that the most relevant models for the area of research in this thesis are those which fine-tune the beginnings of children's independent writing attempts and which focus on the process of development, rather than those which formulate classifications of the product (eg. Kinneavy, 1971; Britton, 1975). Goodman's (1988) work included a proposal of three principles in development: (1) functional, in which literacy events are stimulation; (2) linguistic, the use of syntactic, semantic and pragmatic cues as well as orthographic; (3) relational, utilising knowledge of how language represents the world. The last two principles are concerned with how the alphabetic writing system works.

As previously mentioned, most models of writing are derived from research on written products with no account of the way in which children behaved in constructing the text. In contrast Ferreiro and Teberosky (1992) identified five stages through which children pass as they develop as writers.

The first stage involves intentionality in creating a message and is related to world knowledge such that, for example, a big object will be represented with more marks (i.e. a longer word) than a small object. At level two, conventional graphics begin to be incorporated in differing combinations. Level three is characterised by what Ferreiro and Teberosky name the 'syllabic hypothesis' which incurs a qualitative leap such that each letter is representative of a word or syllable. Early awareness of sound-symbol correspondences generates cognitive conflict and level four marks the progression to the alphabetic principle, using properties of text as cues. Level five is the achievement of alphabetic writing as children systematically analyse and represent phonemes in their writing. This level marks the progress towards conventional literacy in which orthographic systems are yet to be mastered.

Czerniewska (1992) points out that Ferreiro and Teberosky's empirical techniques involved limited samples of writing analysis and that children may not follow the same developmental pathway so clearly. Moreover, similar to Clay's (1975) principles, these levels serve only to describe written products. Nevertheless, Ferreiro and Teberosky's study is one of many investigations during the 1980's which found a great deal of evidence about children's independent writing abilities.

Relating this to the earlier discussion on the interdependent nature of writing and reading, Frith's (1985) work provides a conceptual framework that encompasses reading and writing development. Frith's (1985) model of skill acquisition in reading and writing sees word recognition and spelling as proceeding in three overlapping stages which mark the shifting relationship between progress in reading and progress in spelling. Each critical stage brings previous experiences to bear.

Frith outlines three stages of development from logographic to alphabetic or analytic to orthographic. Her model suggests that children's reading and writing development proceed out of step. During the early stages of the orthographic phase in reading, children's simultaneous writing development requires the ability to translate words into spellings. This means that they have to attend more closely to sounds in order to represent them. Thus, the analytic or alphabetic strategy prevails even while the logographic strategy continues to be used for reading. As children begin to apply the analytic abilities to their reading they learn more about graphophonic relationships and can be taught to read new words by analogy with known words and their spelling patterns. During the early stages of the orthographic phase, reading starts to influence writing again. Children begin to transfer orthographic structures to writing and learn to attend more carefully to the ways in which words are constructed and to the visual aspect of spelling. This translates directly to practice in Reading Recovery. Teachers prompt children to check whether a word *looks* right as well as *sounds* right.

Frith describes this shift in balance as the 'pacemaker' with reading being the pacemaker for the logographic strategy, writing for the alphabetic strategy and reading for the orthographic one. This model of written language development thus synthesises the reading and writing processes. In the next section a final model is considered and related directly to the Reading Recovery lesson procedures.

2.6.4 The Model of Writing within the Reading Recovery Programme

Clay (1991) articulates a model of writing which traces development using children's products but which also illuminates the cognitive procedures activated by the learner. She (pp. 108-109) describes a similar outline to that of Gentry and Henderson (1980). Clay traces development from

scribbles, experimentation with letter-like writing and name writing, to the incorporation of acquired print knowledge in independent writing.

Her model emphasises that what a child writes independently is an indication of that which she is attending to in print. Clay indicates how children begin to attend closely to features of letters, construct their own words, attend to spatial concepts, and begin to work within the order and sequence of the constraints of print. They become able to analytically break down the task into its smallest segments while simultaneously synthesising them into words and sentences by engaging in segmenting sounds in words in order to write them. This is consistent with the work of Bryant and Bradley (1980). From their study, the authors conclude that children start to learn to read and spell in different ways. They learn to spell by using phonological segments and thus emphasising the part played by gaining and activating knowledge of the alphabetic principle.

Clay emphasises the aural task of hearing sounds or chunks of sounds and representing these in sequence. This sits within the analytic phase of Frith's (1985) model. Clay argues that one efficient way of tackling print is to teach a wide range of phonological awareness such as the use of syntax for learning orthographic clusters, rather than just the alphabetic letter-sound system (1991, p.85; p.290). Referring to the work of Stanovich (1987) she maintains that "learning phonological identities of letters and letter clusters in the context of trying to write a message...is the meaningful, analytic task that some theorists have been calling for" (1991, p. 291).

Finally, children add orthographic knowledge to their use of the phonological code as they begin to organise their increasing lexical knowledge and write with fluency. Clay does not refer directly to Frith's model. However, by design the Reading Recovery lesson incorporates writing and reading episodes. These are often closely aligned and teachers

make explicit links between the two processes; "reading and writing are seen as closely interconnected, writing being a particularly appropriate vehicle for developing phonic awareness in a purposeful setting, and phonic awareness then improving reading" (Sylva and Hurry, 1995. p. 16). For example, a newly learned high-frequency sight word can be transferred to practice in the writing episode by being incorporated into the written product. It could be considered that while Frith's model presents the development of reading and writing at word level, Clay encompasses a focus on text level as children refine their concepts about print.

2.7 Conclusion

This chapter has highlighted the range of research devoted to early writing acquisition. Using Clay, as creator of the Reading Recovery programme, an explicit underlying model of writing has been presented which recognises the significance of all aspects of writing including the alphabetic system. While theorists such as Stanovich and Stanovich (1995) and Perfetti (1995) stress the importance of the alphabetic principle, they are solely concerned that teaching of this should occur, not with how it can best be incorporated into children's literacy learning experiences. This thesis is chiefly concerned with the interaction between child and teacher that moves the writing episode along and the interaction in relation to the written product or specific knowledge learned therein. The model presented here facilitates an understanding of the procedures incorporated into the writing episode of the Reading Recovery lesson and is directly related to practice of teaching writing in the programme.

PART II THE READING RECOVERY PROGRAMME

CHAPTER THREE

READING RECOVERY

3.1 Introduction

Reading Recovery is a system-wide, sophisticated intervention designed to help children experiencing reading difficulties after one year at school. Whilst those who work with Reading Recovery (RR) have knowledge of its origins and practices, the tutorial programme can be much misunderstood. In Great Britain in recent years, Reading Recovery received extensive media coverage as national implementation progressed. Despite government withdrawal of funding in 1995, Reading Recovery continues to be supported by LEAs which have established the programme. This chapter seeks to examine the theoretical, practical and research initiatives of the tutorial programme named Reading Recovery. The evidence on the effectiveness of Reading Recovery will be reviewed. Evidence from large-scale field trials and controlled experimental evaluation studies will be drawn on.

3.2 What is Reading Recovery?

Reading Recovery, somewhat of a misnomer, is an intensive, one-to-one tutorial intervention devised by Marie Clay (1985), subsequent to her detailed research on how children learn to write and read. Whilst the name engenders a concept of children 'recovering' as readers, the tutorial includes elements devoted to writing as well as reading. This acknowledges the inter-related nature of the development of these two

language processes as discussed in Chapter Two.

Reading Recovery is an early intervention programme specifically designed for children showing evidence of literacy difficulties at the end of their first year in primary school. The status of Reading Recovery as intervention rather than a remedial programme is clarified in Pianta's (1990) classification of primary, secondary and tertiary prevention. Primary deals with those not yet identified as having a problem or difficulty. Secondary prevention requires selection of a group of the population manifesting the highest likelihood of having difficulty, that is, those at risk of later failure. This is the level at which Reading Recovery can be conceived as intervention.

The programme is aimed at children of six years of age or after one full year of schooling. Children are selected on the basis of scores attained on a battery of tests delivered as a diagnostic survey (Clay, 1985; 1993a; 1993b). Depending on funding, a certain percentage is offered access to the programme. In New Zealand the bottom 20% in any class is recommended. The programme is designed to foster the development of effective reading strategies integrating knowledge of the various language cues, conventions and sound and visual patterns. The ultimate intention is to develop a self-monitoring system by which children are able to operate successfully on print (Clay, 1991). The content of Reading Recovery is discussed in the section on the practice of Reading Recovery.

Following the Diagnostic Survey and admittance to the programme, individual tuition ensues with experienced teachers who have received further training in Reading Recovery techniques over a one year period. It is an out-of-class programme which operates daily for one half hour for up to twenty weeks. Whilst this thesis is concerned with Reading Recovery at the teacher-child level, there is an extensive network of teacher training

and the requirement of structural links to training institutions and LEA leadership. Any description of Reading Recovery therefore must recognise that it is more than a series of lessons but "a system-wide intervention that involves a network of education, communication, and collegiality designed to create a culture of learning that promotes literacy for high-risk children" (Lyons, Pinnell & DeFord, 1993, p. 2). In fact, Simmons (1991) suggests that Reading Recovery may be most effective as a tool for staff professional development, and not primarily for children's literacy development. Thus, the uniqueness of Reading Recovery resides in both the programme curriculum and the attention to implementation issues.

3.3 Assessment of Reading and Writing Ability

The Diagnostic Survey (Clay, 1985; 1993) is used both to identify and monitor children in need of intervention instruction and as a research instrument to assess outcomes. Different studies vary in the range of test instruments used but the majority uses as a minimum the sub-tests comprising the Diagnostic Survey.

3.3.1 The Diagnostic Survey

The Diagnostic Survey comprises five sub-tests plus Book Level as follows:-

(1) Book Level: a graded series of books is used to assess the highest level at which a child can read accurately (typically defined as 90% accuracy). Levels range between 0-24 in the original New Zealand version. Scoring is based on the evidence from a running record which is the teacher's assessment of the meaning, syntax and visual strategies and errors used by a child while reading a text unaided.

(2) Letter Identification: the number or upper-case and lower-case letters of the alphabet correctly identified. Scores range between 0-54. Records mark acceptable responses which may be identifying a letter by stating the alphabetic name, its corresponding sound or a word for which the letter is the initial letter

(3) Concepts about print: a child's understanding of the conventions of written language, e.g. direction of reading print, and units of print such as letter, words. Scores range between 0-24. Assessment is scored using Clay's (1979b) books, Sand or Stones.

(4) Word test: this is a test of reading vocabulary, the number of frequently occurring words that a child can read out of context taken from a word list. Scores range between 0-15.

(5) Writing vocabulary: the number of words that can be written independently and accurately in ten minutes.

(6) Dictation: accuracy in writing a sentence is determined from dictation. Scores range between 0-37. The test is concerned not with spelling accuracy but the extent to which the child can hear sounds in words and represent them appropriately. Points are scored for correct recording of each sound heard.

3.3.2 The Use of Standardised Tests

Additional standardised tests of reading and writing have been administered in some studies.

- Schonell (R1) Word Reading Test: a test of word recognition (used by Clay, 1985).
- Peters Word Spelling Test (used by Clay, 1985).

- Burt Graded Word Test: similar to the word tests in the Diagnostic Survey (used by Clay, 1985; Wheeler, 1984; Wright, 1992).
- Woodcock Reading Mastery Test: comprises sub-tests of letter identification, word recognition and text comprehension. Scores on the sub-tests are aggregated to yield a single measure of reading ability (used by Pinnell, DeFord & Lyons, 1991).
- Gates-MacGintie Reading Test: administered to groups of children, comprising sub-tests of word recognition and text comprehension, yielding an aggregate score (used by Pinnell, DeFord & Lyons, 1991).

3.4 The Development of Reading Recovery

The Reading Recovery programme is based on Clay's early detailed studies which subsequently underwent four years of evaluative trials (Clay, 1985).

3.4.1 Clay's Early Studies

In her book Observing Young Readers, Clay (1982) reported the details of a longitudinal study. The design involved weekly observations of children interacting with printed text and a test battery administered at ages 5, 5.6, and 6 years. One hundred children in five schools with no significant difference in social economic status were her subjects. With regard to her method, Clay (1985) aptly states that "despite some lingering mistrust of observation in educational research, it is becoming more acceptable to use direct observations as a method for data collection particularly in the years of early childhood education" (p. 1).

Observers kept weekly records of coded categories. After one year these were analysed and the sample divided into four ability groups: high (H), high-middle (HM), low-middle (LM) and low (L). Clay's observations

resulted in records of young children interacting with print in the early stages of involvement with text. She records visual sensitivity to letter and word, directional constraints operated on movement and children's ability to construct appropriate speech responses and to integrate these with matching to text. In addition there was evidence of self-correcting behaviour. Results were also obtained from the four book reading stages. There were differences in the number of words read between all groups and with the self-correction ratios; half of all subjects used the strategy of returning to the beginning of the line. Hence there were significant differences between HM and LM. Clay (1985) concluded from her findings that a good reader "manipulates a network of language, spatial and visual perception cues" (p. 28), and that these were implicitly organised and acted upon.

This focus on the salient aspects of the process, on a description of error behaviour and self -monitoring ability, led to Clay's development of an early intervention programme. Reading Recovery was designed to address the specific literacy difficulties of those children, who in spite of being taught well in an effective, coherent teaching programme, fail to progress. The ultimate design represents an informed and balanced approach to the teaching of reading and writing.

Field Trials

Clay (1980, 1985) reported on the field trials of 1978 and 1979. Henceforth the nascent structure of a programme entitled Reading Recovery was built. It sought to enable children with difficulties to develop the kinds of strategies used by good beginning readers (Pinnell, DeFord & Lyons, 1988). The concern was not to detect the cause, but with a rich knowledge of the early literacy process to develop a framework of generative activities to make explicit for children with literacy learning difficulties what many

children learn in a constructive, literate and assisted environment.

Her 1978 research question was whether there was an improvement after intervention and whether those who were 'discontinued' (i.e., succeeded in the programme) retained their gains. Clay argued that control children were not selected as they were considered to be "too competent to be included". 'Discontinued' children were those who had received tuition and were successfully discharged if observational and test data showed them to be able to operate independently on text. 'Not discontinued' children were those who would terminate the programme after one year but who had not reached successful levels of writing and reading.

During these field trials, measures of literacy administered were the Diagnostic Survey, Schonell Reading Inventory (this instrument is reported as reliable, valid and sensitive in Clay, 1966), the Slosson Oral Reading Test plus the Peters Spelling Test.

Clay (1985) reported on the 1978/1979 field trials that the majority of children receiving Reading Recovery tuition achieved accelerated progress. At the end of the programme year, discontinued Reading Recovery children compared favourably to a higher achieving group who did not require extra help at the start of the year. This study did not include a control group. Essentially, Reading Recovery children had caught up with their peers. In the follow up study children who had received Reading Recovery continued to make progress comparable to their peers in the same classes. Clay also demonstrated that this consistency was found across ethnic, economic and language groups.

These studies constitute the evolution of the Reading Recovery tuition programme in New Zealand. Subsequent research proceeded in Ohio, America, in Australia and more recently in Great Britain.

Evaluation of these studies and criticisms of the earlier work form the basis of later parts of this chapter. First, it is necessary to examine the basic tenets of the Reading Recovery programme and to discuss the practice of Reading Recovery more fully.

3.5 Reading Recovery - The Basic Tenets

Clay (1985) states that children in her original study were showing signs of difficulties 12 to 18 months prior to reliable assessments on standardised tests and she devised a process of systematic observation in order to achieve early identification. Thus the programme, by design, will catch some children who may in time have learned to read without this special help, but also recruits many children who would not succeed without intervention. It will also identify children who may require further specialist help by dint of their not achieving 'discontinuation' from the programme.

The Reading Recovery programme is aimed at children of six years of age, which in New Zealand is exactly one year after entry to formal schooling. In other countries Reading Recovery is tailored to cater for children between six and seven years old or approximately one year after schooling has commenced. The reason for this, according to Clay, is to allow children from differential home backgrounds to find out what reading and writing are all about and to allow opportunity for them to actively engage with the literacy process before diagnostic testing.

Clay (1990) argues that with a rich literacy environment and multiple opportunities to read and write in a variety of ways, most children will develop competencies in response to effective teaching. After a year, it is possible to identify those children having difficulties.

Pinnell, DeFord and Lyons (1988) outline some theoretical principles of Reading Recovery and it can be seen how these are grounded in a framework of literacy learning as discussed in Chapter Two. An underlying tenet, based on the early research in New Zealand, is that good readers operate a range of strategies using print cues simultaneously or appropriately. In contrast, a reader with difficulties, operates on a limited range of cues and strategies. Pinnell and her colleagues stress that reading is a strategic process including monitoring of cues from a range of sources: meaning (context and semantics), language structure (syntax and grammar), particular features of the story or book, visual information (orthographic), letter-sound relationships (phonics) and pictorial information. None of these cues operates in isolation. This information is accessed through processes termed strategies which are activated when reading continuous text. Therefore, in practice, Reading Recovery seeks to offer not less, but more and broader opportunities for reading connected text with an adult as well as incorporating word level work.

Pinnell, DeFord and Lyons (1988) offer a second theoretical principle of Reading Recovery which recognises that reading and writing are interconnected, reciprocal processes such that learning in one enhances the other. This is reflected in the structure of the lessons.

A further principle states that the school literacy learning environment and mode of teaching influences the child's conception of what literacy learning is all about. Slavin and Madden's (1989) synthesis of research on effective reading programmes for children with difficulties found that the Reading Recovery programme was the only one at this level for which evidence of positive outcomes were sustained two years after discontinuation. Less successful programmes may not attend sufficiently to details of print within continuous text which is important for those having difficulties.

A summative tenet of Reading Recovery is that it is based on a conception of writing and reading as discussed in Chapter Two. This is consistent with the Reading Recovery approach which recognises the child is an active, constructive learner; that reading is a strategic, multi-cue process (Weinstein & Mayer, 1986); that reading and writing are interconnected, reciprocal processes such that learning in one enhances the other (Frith, 1985; Pinnell, DeFord & Lyons, 1988; Frith, 1985); that the school literacy approach influences children's conceptions of reading and writing (Barr, 1978; Francis, 1982;); and that it is productive to intervene early (Clay, 1985; Pinnell, 1989).

3.6 The Practice of Reading Recovery

3.6.1 Reading Recovery Implementation

Implementation of Reading Recovery depends on budget factors in the various societies and education authorities in which the programme operates. Reading Recovery seeks to offer systematic and supplementary help to enable young children with difficulties to develop as effective literacy learners at an accelerated rate (Clay, 1990). It is a short-term compensatory programme, providing extra individual help on a 'pull-out' basis of daily, thirty-minute sessions. In the New Zealand studies, the duration in the programme was generally 16 to 20 weeks (Clay, 1985).

Access to the programme is prefaced by a teacher referral. The Diagnostic Survey and other standardised tests are administered. Procedures for diagnosis and instruction are discussed in detail in Clay (1985), The Early Detection of Reading Difficulties and Clay (1993b), The New Observation Survey. The Diagnostic Survey is also the basis for discontinuation.

3.6.2 The Reading Recovery Lesson

The first two weeks of the Reading Recovery programme are designated as exploratory for teacher and child engaging in writing and reading, and termed Roaming Around the Known. A range of reading schemes and other books are used, grouped together in 20 graded levels. This enables children to experience success with several books before increasing the challenge. In this country, many of the books already exist in classrooms as 'reading books'.

The lesson framework is constructed as a set of generative activities which typically conforms to the format outlined in Table 3.1. Furthermore, "those activities in which the child engages in each lesson, relate to the psychological processes described in current models of reading and writing acquisition" (Clay, 1988, p. 11). The child's strategies used for operating on text and any new learning are analysed and recorded throughout the lesson. The teaching is closely tied to these continuous assessments of children's performance. The lesson episodes remain constant while the books read, messages written, words used for structural analysis and teacher-child interactions are individually designed.

Table 3.1 ***Outline of Lesson Framework***

Episode	Content
1	*Re-reading of two or three familiar books.* Interaction occurs during and after reading, with the teacher-supporting strategies used.
2	*Board work.* Manipulating plastic letters for word analysis for comparison, writing and rewriting individual letters and words.[1] This episode can re-occur several times at various points during the lesson and often occurs briefly for the first few seconds of the lesson. This work on a magnetic board is very similar to Bradley's (1981) Simultaneous Oral Spelling.
3	*Running Record.* This takes place on a book which was introduced the previous day. This process is similar to miscue analysis (Goodman & Goodman, 1977). The child works independently while the teacher records reading strategies (monitoring and searching) and cues (meaning, syntactic, visual), only supplying a word if the child is in obvious difficulties. Subsequent to the taking of the running record, the teacher recapitulates the book with the child, verbalising and demonstrating to the child how she had operated on the text.

[1]The statement by Pinnell, DeFord and Lyons, (1988) that "at no time in the Reading Recovery programme is the child asked to read isolated words" (p. 8) is in fact misleading, as children do operate on individual words, sometimes from the context of the book they are reading but this is not always the case. However, this practice is cogently explained in Clay's (1988) paper in which she states that "every activity in Reading Recovery takes place at the level of intact text messages and any attention given to sounds, words or letters is a temporary change of gear with the intent of returning to the text level of processing with more information" (p. 8).

4 *Written story.* A sentence is generated by teacher and child and written in a blank paged exercise book. The upper page is used for working on sound/visual analysis, spelling and word or letter practice, word comparison and the lower page for the completed story. Often, new words are attempted using boxes for hearing sounds in words; a technique adapted from an aural task by Elkonin (1973).

5 *Cut-up story.* The child then reads her story to the teacher who scribes this onto a card strip which is cut up at word, syllable or cluster level for the child to re-assemble and read.

6 *Introduction to new book.* The teacher and child discuss the book selected by the teacher in order to build a frame of meaning and to look at any new words. Selection is based on the level of challenge a text offers to the reader's developing strategies and which it is predicted, the child will be able to read at or above 90% accuracy in the next day's running record. The text both supports current abilities and offers new learning.

7 *Reading of new book.* The child attempts to read this with teacher guidance and teaching for strategies.[2]

The empirical work in this thesis is concerned with the writing episode. This is described in greater detail.

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[2]This description of the lesson framework is that set out by Clay but is also based on Pilot study observations, which confirm the order and content.

3.6.3 The Writing Episode

Once the child and teacher have generated a sentence to be written, the teacher guides the child to produce an accurate representation using the child's existing print knowledge. Opportunities arise for the teacher to present new knowledge. The rationale for this model is that teacher and child first compose the text. The sentence is orally rehearsed. Attention can then focus on the transcriptional aspects with the teacher acting as memory aid.

One method is to allow the child to write the sentence independently and then the teacher recapitulates with the child, placing stickers over the child's approximated spellings. The teacher then demonstrates and draws out the standard spelling together with the child. A second method is to allow the child to write that which she knows. The teacher skilfully anticipates and intervenes when she knows the child needs help so that an accurate representation is produced through questioning and demonstration.

Clay (1991) reports that in New Zealand schools there is a reduction of emphasis on the teaching of phonic systems of decoding with an increased focus on procedures and strategies for analysing words into sounds (phonemic segments); "A powerful strategy for teachers to encourage is for children to use the sounds they hear in words they are trying to write, and finding letters for those sounds they hear" (Clay, 1991, p. 111).

The main procedure for implementing this rationale in the Reading Recovery lesson is to use Elkonin (1973) boxes. Clay (1985, pp. 64-67) provides an illustrated explanation of the Recovery procedure, stressing that "it is an essential feature of the theory behind this tutoring to hear

sounds in words in sequence" (p. 65). Initially the teacher draws squares for each sound (not letter) of the word to be written. The child says the word separating out each sound while placing a counter into the corresponding square. Later on, squares can be used for each letter. Gradually the child is able to use aural analysis without the aid of counters and squares and finally, independently and silently. For further reference, Clay (1991, pp. 84-85) provides a detailed description of Elkonin's views and work. Other words are taught by analogy and children are visually taught irregularly spelt words.

The rationale that relates this to the writing model by Clay presented in Chapter Two, is that these procedures invite the child to problem-solve with the adult as a source of support, rather than a demand for correctness (Clay, 1991). The constant weaving together of spelling and reading that operates in this episode and the manipulation of the cut-up sentence, is consistent with Frith's (1985) model of literacy learning.

3.6.4 Summary

While the Reading Recovery lesson follows the set structure outlined, activities are carefully selected for a particular child's needs; Clay (1985) defines the process within the format of Reading Recovery as "progressive and accumulative" (p. 14). Pinnell, DeFord and Lyons (1988) purport that "the power of Reading Recovery is in the framework of the lesson itself..." (p. 2). However, Meek (1992) asserts her reservations stating that "the daily imposition of a tightly structured lesson may change their (children's) view of the nature of what learning to read is all about" (p. 29). This is an important consideration and will be researched in the interview study.

Throughout the lesson and Reading Recovery programme, the child's progress is continually monitored and assessed using the running record and book level changes. Discontinuation from the programme involves re-administration of the Diagnostic Survey plus any other standardised tests. There is no fixed level of text or test score for discontinuation. This is dependent on analysis of the child's literacy behaviour which must indicate substantial evidence that she has developed effective reading strategies to operate independently in the classroom.

This depicts the practice of Reading Recovery in its current form. Clay (1980) places Reading Recovery in a temporal context by outlining four phases:

1. Entry to school aged 5 years
2. Tutoring phase after age 6 years, plus tests.
3. Return to class
4. Follow up phase

This thesis then focuses on phase two of this outline.

3.7 Reading Recovery - Review of Research

Due to its relatively recent international implementation, the nature of Reading Recovery research has been in the manner of outcome studies and comparative outcome studies. There are a few qualitative studies beginning to emerge (e.g. Gardner, Sutherland & Meenan-Strain, 1996). The majority of research took place in the 1980's following Clay's own studies, the chief ones occurring in New Zealand, Australia, America and more recently in Britain. Shanahan and Barr (1995) provide an overview of Reading Recovery research. Their analysis relied heavily on empirical evidence from American evaluations. This section critically examines

whether the documentation of Reading Recovery largely substantiates its success and considers explanations discussed in the literature.

The effectiveness of Reading Recovery can be currently assessed according to several criteria. This thesis will broaden the scope of assessing the effectiveness of Reading Recovery beyond the use of test scores only. The current criteria for assessment are: (1) in terms of the proportion of children who successfully complete the programme and are discontinued on attaining a comparable 'average'; (2) whether such improvements are significantly greater than for comparable children who have not received Reading Recovery; (3) whether the gains achieved in literacy are sustained following termination of instruction; (4) whether the gains achieved are superior to those from other interventions.

Studies are examined separately and culminate in a summative discussion using the above criteria. Gittleman (1985) produced a three-page report on the efficacy of remedial reading programmes and concluded that evidence for their effectiveness was very limited. In her 1990 speech, Clay argues that Gittleman's conclusions are drawn from a handful of controlled studies and suggests that the evaluative research could fail to capture what really occurs and therefore have a limited conception of effectiveness. In support of the Reading Recovery programme and related research, Clay (1988) reports that "data from studies of successful intervention mounted in three countries (New Zealand, Australia and America) with children in their second year of school support the arguments that...the effects of developmental lags can be minimised in individually designed and delivered programmes" (p. 2). These and other studies are reviewed in more detail.

3.7.1 Clay (1985)

Clay's research is comprehensively reported in her book, The Early Detection of Reading Difficulties and more recently in two volumes (1993a, 1993b). Her studies monitor the entry and outcome scores of Reading Recovery children, those discontinued and not discontinued, and graphs their progress with the average band of pupils. The research concludes that after an average of 30-40 hours, 90% of children whose pre-test scores were in the lowest 20% were caught up to the average band and needed no further remediation (Boehnlein, 1987). In her own book, Clay (1985) maintains that the Reading Recovery research indicates rapid progress. Clay (1990a) and Pinnell, Fried and Estice (1990) report statistics of this study to demonstrate that the gains achieved were consistent across ethnic, economic and language groups (p. 290).

3.7.2 Wheeler (1986)

This report discusses the effective implementation of Reading Recovery in Australia. Smith (1986) outlines the basics of the programme and compares two consecutive years of implementation in Australia, suggesting that adhering closely to recommended procedures increases the efficiency in terms of shorter time spent in Reading Recovery.

3.7.3 Pinnell , DeFord and Lyons (1988)

The authors present a number of studies in the state of Ohio, U.S.A. Table 3.2 illustrates the temporal frame for these research projects.

Table 3.2 Time Frame of American Reading Recovery Studies

	1985-86	1986-87	1987-88
Ohio longitudinal	.....		
Ohio State 1st year	-----		
2nd year		-----	
3rd year			-----

The longitudinal study followed the progress of a cohort of children in the bottom 20% of their classes, who received Reading Recovery. The composition of the selection was based on twelve schools and 32 teachers, 12 of whom were trained the previous year, and 20 who were in training during the 1985-86 year of the study. From these schools, children who scored the lowest on pre-tests were randomly assigned to Reading Recovery or an alternative compensatory programme (which was not conducted by trained teachers but class assistants and was operated in groups). 136 children received Reading Recovery and 51 received the alternative programme (all year) and were termed comparison children. In addition a third group consisted of 102 random sample of first graders who were also tested on seven dependent measures (i.e. all of the diagnostic survey plus two sub-tests of the comprehensive tests of basic skills).

At the end of the first year (1986) 73% of Reading Recovery children were discontinued after an average lesson number of 67 sessions. Data indicate that on all measures Reading Recovery children scored higher than

comparison children and scores of the total Reading Recovery children were similar to the random sample group. In fact, in four out of the seven measures, they scored slightly higher.

When the scores of Reading Recovery children were separated as to those discontinued and those still in the programme, the Reading Recovery discontinued group scored higher than the random sample in all seven measures. Other supportive evidence is reported in that on a nationally normal standardised test, Reading Recovery children gained while comparison children had minus scores. Thus, at the end of the first year of the longitudinal study the results indicate evidence of Reading Recovery as an effective programme.

Over the next two years follow up studies of the same cohort sought to compare Reading Recovery and comparison groups and to ascertain whether the Reading Recovery children retained their gains. At the end of 1987 and 1988 all children were assessed on text reading level at 90% accuracy. One year on, Reading Recovery children performed better than the comparison group (RR - 14.39; CG - 11.25) and much better if only the scores of Reading Recovery discontinued children are taken. Two years on, the Reading Recovery group sustained its gains (RR - 19.70; CG - 16.71: reported in Pinnell, Fried and Estice, 1990, but the significance of these differences is not cited).

The Ohio State study operated in three one-year phases. The effectiveness of Reading Recovery was measured, as with Clay's study, by comparison of Reading Recovery children with average bands of first graders. There was no comparison group. Children were tested at the end of each school year on ten dependent measures; the diagnostic survey plus phoneme-grapheme consonants, phoneme-grapheme vowels, and reading comprehension. Table 3.3 shows the percentage of Reading Recovery children discontinued.

Table 3.3 Children Discontinued in Ohio Study

	Number of children	Discontinued
Year 1	110	73%
Year 2	1130	83%
Year 3	2648	86%

Studies in years two and three indicated a high percentage of Reading Recovery children achieving scores within the average bands. This report contains the scores achieved and thereby these state evaluation studies indicate that the Reading Recovery programme was successful in its first three years of implementation. Together, these studies attest to the effectiveness of Reading Recovery according to all of the criteria previously outlined.

3.7.4 Lyons (1987)

A three-part study was conducted. 110 poor readers including 35 children classified as learning disabled (LD) received Reading Recovery. The results were that 33 of the 35 LD children were discontinued and that 27 of these needed no further help. In the second part of the study the oral text reading of 6 LD discontinued children and 6 not LD discontinued children was monitored and reading error patterns recorded. These were coded for meaning, structure, visual-cue errors, and self-corrections. The results indicated that the LD children relied too heavily on visual cues. The third

part of the study monitored the development of one LD child who learned rapidly to expand from a largely visual to a multiple cueing system. The three parts of this study are reviewed separately.

Part one. In this study the LD label was applied to those with normal intelligence but with difficulties in reading. However, current understandings of LD are unclear and inconsistent, operating on different theoretical assumptions, and in this context LD is not really clearly defined, except for the administration of a psychological test. The use of the LD labelled child does not feature in any of Lyons' subsequent work and is not common to Reading Recovery research.

Part two. Six LD Reading recovery children and six non-LD Reading Recovery children were compared on text reading. The six non-LD children were used to control for consistency in recording error patterns. Meaning (M), structure (S) and visual (V) were the three basic cueing systems recorded. Reliability and validity of the coding system were established by Clay (1973; 1985). Running records were used to calculate the number of errors of those with between 85-98% accuracy and errors were tallied as follows:

M S V

MS MV SV MSV

The result of this part of the study was that the overall error patterns of discontinued LD children were different from the patterns of non-LD discontinued children. The LD children over-relied on visual information compared with the non-LD children who used the meaning and structure of the language more and progressed to integration of these cues. LD children do not begin to orchestrate multiple sources of information until much later.

Part three. In this final part of the study the error patterns of one child's reading were monitored. At level three 90% of the time visual cues were recorded and at level four this was 66%. By level 7 and 8 major shifts to using a multiple cueing system had occurred. (Clay, 1985 points out that proficient readers resort to visual information when not able to make sense of the text. Stanovich, 1980, 1986, debates this issue). Hence, a primary shift from the use of visual information to semantic, syntactic and visual occurred.

This study is not chiefly concerned with the effectiveness of Reading Recovery for children with literacy difficulties but with LD labelled children's development. As such, it's contribution is limited because of the large controversy and debate centred on the LD label. Lyons attributed the results of the single child study (part 3) to the interaction between child and teacher as the lesson plans indicated an insistence on focusing on the structure and sense of the texts used. Yet this is what much of Reading Recovery aims at for every child. These interactive patterns constitute a focus of the observational study in this thesis.

3.7.5 Hatcher, Hulme and Ellis (1994)

This British longitudinal intervention study explored differences in learning to read among seven-year-olds in four matched groups; control, reading alone, phonology alone, reading with phonology. The emphasis on phonology emanates from the focus of the study on a phonological linkage hypothesis. The authors cite a large amount of evidence relating the development of reading skills to underlying phonological ability (e.g., Goswami & Bryant, 1990; Hulme & Snowling, 1991). It is argued that the ability exhibited on phonological awareness tasks is one of the best predictors of reading skill. Bradley and Bryant's (1983) influential study is widely cited as indicative of a causal influence of phonological awareness.

Clay (1988) emphatically states that the research for Reading Recovery previously cited in detail in this chapter, *"supports the arguments that text reading supports the progress of low achievers, that writing is involved in reciprocal contribution to reading gains, (and) that phonological awareness can be an early outcome variable from early reading rather than an input variable" (p. 2).*

The authors of this study define the phonological linkage hypothesis in that phonological skill training alone may be less effective than training which links phonological skills to experiences in learning to read. They state that "training in phonological skills alone is not a very powerful way of affecting reading development" (p. 6). This is consistent with the current understanding of the network of cueing systems children need to be taught in order to learn to read.

This study is scrupulous in design. It involved screening children first through Carver's (1970) reading test and then Raven's Coloured Progressive Matrices. Following this, IQ tests from Weschler (1974) were administered, two verbal (similarities and vocabulary) and two performance (object assembly and block design). Children were then matched on reading ability using the British Ability Scale and Word Reading Test (Elliot, Murray & Pearson, 1983). The procedure involved a battery of tests as follows:

Reading:	Early word Recognition Test
	BAS Word Recognition Test
	Neale Analysis of Reading ability
Spelling:	Schonell (1956)
Arithmetic:	BAS basic number skills test A (Elliot, Murray & Pearson, 1983). (This test was used to show

	that gains were specific to the domain of literacy.)
Phonological skills:	Sound deletion (Bruce 1864)
	Sound blending
	Non-word segmentation
	Sound categorisation (Bradley 1984)

The children were divided into four groups receiving forty 30-minute sessions over twenty weeks. The four conditions were:

1. P (phonological training), involving a package of activities which were sequenced in practice and had record sheets to monitor progress.

2. R & P (reading and phonology), modelled on Clay's (1985) Reading Recovery plus the additional P package. (This should not really be called Reading Recovery as it was only a version of the programme and not implemented by a trained Reading Recovery teacher).

3. R (reading), the version of Reading Recovery but without the explicit phonological package.

4. C, referring to normal classroom teaching.

Data were obtained from changes in reading in pre and post-tests and also nine months later. The authors maintain that the hypothesis that if phonological training is to be effective it must be integrated to reading, is supported by their results. However, one would expect this to be so because ability in phonology is not reading *per se*. The R & P group improved more in reading and spelling than R or P. The authors conclude that the most effective way to improve literacy skills is to integrate the two as either component in isolation is less effective. Phonological skill is a component

of the multi-skill process of reading and so it is not a question of one component being compared with another but one component being compared with the total process in which case the R & P group are bound to excel.

While the findings from this study suggest that phonological training is an important component of effective literacy programmes, "they have little bearing on Reading Recovery proper" (Demetre, 1993, p. 18). This is particularly because standard Reading Recovery programmes do provide guidance in knowledge of the alphabetic system and phonological aspects of reading and spelling.

A similar study by Iverson and Tunmer (1993) predicted that a Reading Recovery programme incorporating training in phonological processing as presented in Bryant and Bradley (1985), would be more effective than Reading Recovery itself. However, contrary to their prediction, the findings of their study showed that the two programmes manifest very similar effects. Although additional phonological training hastened children's progress throughout the Reading Recovery programme, both programmes produced major improvements in Diagnostic Survey scores and scores on phonological processing measures. Hence it is because Reading Recovery does include phonological training that Iverson and Tunmer (1993) found significant changes in phonological processing measures following the 'standard' Reading Recovery programme as well as in their adapted programme.

As an addendum to these studies specifically researching Reading Recovery, Wasik and Slavin (1990) reviewed research on the effectiveness of one-to-one tutoring programmes. Critics of Reading Recovery argue that any one to one experience is bound to increase ability. Yet, the previous study indicates that type of one-to-one tutoring does have an effect. Wasik

and Slavin (1990) raise the question as to why a relatively small amount of time of a daily half-hour session should make such substantial difference in achievement as indicated by the Reading Recovery research. Slavin (1987) cites four elements of effective instruction; quality, appropriate level, incentive and time. Wasik and Slavin (1990) suggest that one-to-one tutoring allows for substantial improvement in the last three but that Reading Recovery also aims at quality.

3.7.6 Pinnell, Lyons, DeFord, Bryk and Seltzer (1991, 1994)

This particularly incisive study compares programmes and their effectiveness, rather than just monitoring Reading Recovery children's development. An often launched criticism of Reading Recovery is that any individual, intensive attention will increase children's ability and could be done less expensively. Clay discusses the inter-relating factors of the programme in her 1990 speech. This Pinnell study set out to research the effectiveness of a Reading Recovery programme as compared with a similar one but which had a shortened teacher training period, a one-to-one skills based programme and a Reading Recovery programme with the same procedures applied in a group situation.

Forty schools spread across ten districts and 403 children were involved in the study. The treatments were:

1. *Reading Recovery* - as has been described
2. *Reading Success* - a similar one-to-one model but with a shortened teacher training
3. *Direct Instruction Skills Plan* - a one-to-one programme but similar to American class based instruction via a systematic development of skill
4. *Reading and Writing group* - Reading Recovery administered on a group basis

5. *Control group* - which were normal remediation (USA Chapter 1) with a basic skills focus

Reported analyses were two-fold, involving student outcome measures and information on the teaching and learning experience. The following outcome measures were used:

- Dictation tests (reliability and validity at 0.79 established by Clay, 1966)
- Text reading level with gradient of text difficulty drawn from American basals, with 26 levels using Clay's (1985) running record and calculating accuracy level
- Mason Early Reading Test (1984) which is a test of concepts supposedly related to emergent literacy. However the test involves reading words out of context and decoding non-words which is certainly not compatible with emergent literacy philosophy. A total score is yielded.
- Woodcock Reading Mastery Test Revised which is a standardised measure involving a battery of tasks measuring aspects of reading such as word identification and comprehension.
- Gates McGintie reading test which is group administered consisting of standardised tests of vocabulary and comprehension.
- Qualitative analysis using video tape and on site observations.

The treatment period was seventy days and a split plots design was used. Analysis operated on a hierarchical linear model, which is a mixed model ANOVA for unbalanced designs (accounting for within and between school factors). Time and content analysis was applied to each experimental and control treatment. Events coded were reading, writing and other activities.

The results indicate that the one-to-one nature of a tutorial is not sufficient or at least does not achieve the higher gains exhibited by Reading Recovery

than the reading and writing group. The impact of teacher training is shown with the reading and writing treatment being the second most effective.

Reading Recovery was the only one for which mean treatment effects were significant on all measures. The discussion presents the reasoning that it is the integral components of Reading Recovery, such as the individual instruction, (flexibility, timing) the instructional emphasis including the quality and quantity of materials, the teacher-student interactional patterns, and the teacher training that count for its success over and above other programmes.

The authors, with reference to the intensity and effectiveness of teaching in Reading Recovery recommend further detailed qualitative research of the interactional patterns. It is this aspect, the feature of teacher and child collaboration on tasks (identified and discussed by Clay and Cazden, 1988), that forms the basis of research in this thesis; "The language that accompanies joint productive activity is the major vehicle for the development of (and) the internalisation of concepts, the development of discourse learning, and the development of higher cognitive processes" (Gallimore & Tharp, 1990, p. 196).

3.7.7 Center, Wheldall, Freeman, Outhred and McNaught (1995)

As an evaluation of Reading Recovery, this study again used a comparison group but not an alternative programme. A range of testing was used and there was random assignment to Reading Recovery or comparison group. The authors did not find significant differences in a twelve-month follow up study, suggesting that investment in the programme should be approached with caution. They further recommended a specific metalinguistic component as tests had shown no difference between the two

groups on relevant measures. Similarly, Glynn, Bethune, Crooks, Ballard and Smith (1992) measured syntactic awareness and found no difference between Reading Recovery children and a comparison group after discontinuation in this area. Tunmer (1990), argues that the findings from this study indicate that Reading Recovery does not systematically address essential metalinguistic skills. The phonological issue was addressed in the following British evaluation study.

3.7.8 Sylva and Hurry (1995)

This UK longitudinal evaluation compared Reading Recovery with a Phonological Training intervention (also one-to-one) closely based on that of Bradley and Bryant (1985), monitoring effectiveness in terms of children's success and cost of the programme over a two year period. There was also a large control group consisting of comparably low-scoring children present in the schools delivering the two other conditions and in control only schools. Twenty-two Reading Recovery schools were sampled in seven Local Education Authorities. Other schools in the same authorities were randomly assigned to Control (18 schools) or Phonological Intervention (23 schools). Pre and post testing incorporated the Diagnostic Survey tests, the British Ability Scale Word Reading test (Elliot et al, 1982) and the Neale Analysis of Reading (1958). The Diagnostic Survey was found to be the most sensitive measure for this ability range.

The study showed that after one year Reading Recovery children made significantly more progress in all the reading measures than control children in non-Reading Recovery schools, and made consistently greater progress in the second year follow-up tests, although the gap had narrowed. The Phonological Intervention produced no significant gains in comparison with control children both within school and between schools, save that of phonological awareness.

This study reflects and is consistent with other international comparisons of Reading Recovery success and the authors conclude that Reading Recovery is a powerful method for improving children's literacy, and particularly so for socially disadvantaged children.

3.8 Reading Recovery Queries and Criticisms

Research studies concerned with the outcomes of Reading Recovery consistently demonstrate success in terms of discontinued children's achievements and progress. However, while Reading Recovery has been transferred to various international educational environments, it has not been without challenge. Queries of Reading Recovery are related to its every aspect, namely the initial research design, the content of Reading Recovery, Reading Recovery outcomes, and the nature and ideals at the heart of Reading Recovery. Some issues have already been raised as they pertain to the individual studies discussed.

While heralded, for example in the British press as a new and novel means for a solution to literacy problems, "the concept of diagnostic teaching is neither new nor revolutionary. It implies simply that teaching is always aimed at starting 'where the child is'" (Hunter-Grundin, 1979, p. 95). The procedures of Reading Recovery particularly new as they are based on what skilled readers have always done and are drawn from good classroom practice.

Meek (1992) casts a critical eye on both the process and the proclaimed achievements of Reading Recovery. She ascertains that Reading Recovery was not designed in or for the context of the pervasive and deep multi-cultural nature of many British schools. Reading Recovery, as a system intervention, has yet to have its staying power tested in this country;

"although the scale of the operation elsewhere can be greater than in its country of origin (e.g., Ohio), so far only New Zealand can demonstrate Reading Recovery as a coherent national system" (OFSTED, 1993).

The question is raised of whether equal delivery engenders unequal privilege. In the American studies children are cited as being discontinued at level 12, which is probably in relation to class average. But practising Reading Recovery teachers in Britain argue that reading strategies are not synthesised until about level 14 and children are mostly discontinued at higher levels than those presented in the American literature.

Several authors have raised the issue concerning the cause of Reading Recovery effectiveness in terms of its components (e.g. Center, Wheldall & Freeman, 1992). Some argue that any one-to-one attention on a daily basis will achieve significant results. However, Pinnell, DeFord and Lyons (1991) in their previously discussed study looked at three experimental groups and a control group concluding that Reading Recovery was the only one for which the mean treatment effect was significant on all measures. Perhaps in response to this general examination of what component of the Reading Recovery programme is causative of success, Clay (1990a) maintains that it is difficult to single out that which explains the progress of the children because of the complex interactive situation. She ascertains that it may not be one or the other variables that contributes specifically to the success of the intervention, but the totality of them working in concert together. This was also recognised by Pluck (1989), who studied four children in Reading Recovery in Cumbria, and concludes that "a superficial copy which reduces or substitutes any component of the programme, the detailed and thorough training of teachers in particular, would, without doubt reduce the effectiveness of the intervention" (p. 358).

Other criticisms of Reading Recovery relate to research designs. In their review, Shanahan and Barr (1995) provide a sound critique of statistical and design flaws in many Reading Recovery studies. Nicholson (1989) and Shanahan (1987) pointed out that the New Zealand studies were without parallel groups of children not in Reading Recovery. It can also be queried that if the discontinued Reading Recovery children perform successfully at the class average level of reading then there must be children with lower scores in order for there to be an 'average'. These children have gone past the Reading Recovery starting line so what happens to the new below average scorers? Also, Wasik and Slavin (1990) state that Clay's (1985) evaluative research in New Zealand focuses entirely on discontinued children and "therefore greatly overstates the effectiveness of the intervention," (p. 4). Center, Wheldall and Freeman (1992) also critique Clay's results for not accounting for children not discontinued, (also for Wheeler, 1986) and thereby inflating reported effectiveness of the programme.

Nicholson (1989) asserts that problems in the American data are evident in that children allocated to Reading Recovery or Reading Success were not randomly assigned. A further flaw being the treatments did not have a classroom control group of peers with difficulties; Chapter 1 (a compensatory basic skills programme) operated as a control rather than peers with no extra help.

Thus the massive dissemination of Reading Recovery in diverse populations has not occurred unchallenged. Simultaneously, in America, less expensive programmes have begun to crop up, but which bear remarkable similarity to the original conception (e.g. Taylor, Short, Frye & Shearer, 1992; McCarthy, Newby & Recht, 1995).

3.9 Discussion

The criteria for the effectiveness of Reading Recovery were outlined at the start of this review. In this section, the evidence relating to each of these criteria is reviewed in separate sub-sections.

3.9.1 Successful Discontinuation and Attainment of Average Literacy Levels

After approximately twenty weeks of participating in Reading Recovery, children are expected to be reading at average levels for their class and are 'discontinued' from the programme. They continue to operate within the routine classroom practice without further withdrawal. Children who are not successfully discontinued are referred for special help, and are judged to have literacy difficulties beyond the scope of Reading Recovery.

Evidence from New Zealand (Clay, 1985), America (Groom, Lyons, Pinnell, DeFord, Sullivan, Cai & Nilges, 1991) and Great Britain (Wright, 1992) indicate a percentage range of children who do not successfully complete Reading Recovery from 2.27% - 11.00%. This percentage in some cases includes children who have moved location as well as children who do not achieve the required levels of improvement. It would seem then that Reading Recovery does succeed with the vast majority of children receiving the intervention.

3.9.2 Comparisons with Control Groups

Evidence discussed thus far suggests that Reading Recovery is a highly effective intervention procedure. However, it is possible that much improvement would occur with the passage of time and may not be directly

attributed to the programme itself. Evaluation must therefore include comparison of Reading Recovery children's performance at discontinuation with that of comparable children with reading difficulties not receiving Reading Recovery.

Clay's studies did not use control samples, seeking to ascertain the efficacy of the programme in relation to the children's success alone. Very few studies employ random allocation to treatments. In some studies control children are those children achieving slightly higher scores and therefore do not receive Reading Recovery, (eg; Glynn, Crooks, Bethune, Ballard & Smith, 1989).

The outcome of such procedures has resulted in the use of gain scores by which it can be demonstrated that Reading Recovery children achieve bigger increases in the Diagnostic Survey sub-tests than the 'controls'. Two studies use control groups comprising those children with adjacent scores to Reading Recovery children receiving 'usual' remedial help, (Pinnell, DeFord & Lyons, 1991; Iverson & Tunmer, 1993). Both studies show Reading Recovery children scoring higher in the outcome assessment and substantially greater improvements than those made by children in the control group.

3.9.3 Maintenance of Improved Outcomes

Follow up studies of discontinued Reading Recovery children show that they continue to make progress in the ensuing years (Clay, 1985; Rowe, 1991). While control children indicate substantial improvement, Reading Recovery children maintain their mean differences in achievement and continue to score higher than the control group on post-tests.

3.9.4 Comparison with Other Programmes

How does Reading Recovery compare in success terms with other specialised programmes? Great Britain does not have specific remedial programmes for such young children and support is usually in the form of extra adult attention on a one-to-one basis or some small group support depending on school policy and budget available. It is essential to retain the concept of Reading Recovery as an intervention rather than a remedial programme. The studies discussed earlier indicate the supremacy of Reading Recovery in achieving increased outcomes on Diagnostic Survey sub-tests over other forms of Reading Recovery or other programmes. However, whether or not other interventions are more cost-effective in the long term must be borne in mind (Sylva & Hurry, 1995). Reading Recovery necessarily involves great financial and long-term investment at every level of implementation.

3.10 Conclusion

All studies to date on Reading Recovery have been concerned with its effectiveness in terms of success in increasing children's reading and writing ability as compared with other children or other programmes. Studies have looked at the content of Reading Recovery lessons and related this to teacher training aspects. While evaluation studies are few in number the criteria for effectiveness outlined earlier and discussed in this part of the paper, indicate that Reading Recovery can improve the literacy skills of most poor readers. The evidence assessed here suggests that for children who have fallen behind their peers at age six, Reading Recovery has been successful in bringing about significant progress in literacy at an accelerated rate. Reading Recovery is a very powerful, if costly, intervention programme for children with literacy difficulties identified by six years of age. Furthermore, Sylva and Hurry (1995) suggest tentative

evidence that the teaching methods used can have a profound effect when shared with classroom teachers in a whole school context.

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CHAPTER FOUR

THE ROLE OF TALK AND SCAFFOLDING LEARNING IN CHILDREN'S WRITING DEVELOPMENT

4.1 Introduction

This chapter focuses on the role of oracy in children's writing development which is pertinent for analysis of the teacher-child interactions in the writing episode of Reading Recovery lessons. This thesis examines the structure of oral teacher-child interactions within the writing episode of the Reading Recovery lesson. The purpose is to examine briefly the role of oral language as children learn to write. Writing and talk are then embedded within the focal theory most recently adopted in discussions on the learning processes within Reading Recovery lessons, embodying the theory of Vygotsky and embracing the metaphorical structure of scaffolding.

The body of empirical studies on children's writing development discussed in Chapter Two, indicate that children are active constructors of written language. Research on children's early writing development primarily focused on product and process. Other branches of research focus on context and multiple literacies and the social and cultural embeddedness of literacy development (Brock, 1990). The next section of this chapter brings this social element of literacy acquisition into focus.

4.2 The Role of Talk

Ethnographic studies of individual children at home and at school have contributed to a view of the child as a constructor of meaning in learning to write by embedding literacy learning within its cultural context (Heath, 1982; Schiefflin & Cochran-Smith, 1984). These studies emphasise the social context in which learning and the acquisition of communicative competence takes place.

There is a need to marry a psycholinguistic focus (the interactive psychological factors within the child affecting the learner) with a sociolinguistic focus (externally interactive factors of language learning and situational variables affecting literacy acquisition). As Blazer (1986) asserts, "In essence the insight contributed by these two perspectives is that the social context of language learning must be moved to the forefront as a critical variable in any language learning process" (p. 77). Hiebert's (1981) empirical study of sixty three to five-year-olds is one example which maintains, as do many of the studies discussed in Chapter Two, that becoming literate has a social dimension. She showed that three-year-old children were fairly proficient in literacy tasks which assessed their knowledge of the alphabetic system and their awareness of the functions and purposes of text. She concluded that this stage was a particularly active time for print-related learning in adult-mediated environments. In contrast, some of the studies mentioned, including Ferreiro and Teberosky's, focus on the individual child. Significant adults and the environment are referred to, but a picture is created of children working through to literacy on their own, which neglects the essential role of the adult in teaching children to write.

Aside from the cultural significance of literacy learning, the move towards not seeing the child as an isolate learner in Piagetian terms, inevitably

brings oracy into the process of writing development. It is not the purpose here to explore the literature on oral language development, nor to draw comparisons between oral and written language acquisition, as debated in Hall (1987). Rather, in part, the nature of this thesis requires at least some discussion of the role oral language plays in early literacy learning, as evident in the work of Wells (1986). The use of oral language is intrinsic to the processes of learning to write and read, which in themselves are conjoint interactive processes (Pinsent, 1990) and hence it features here.

The structure of classroom child-adult discourse is documented in a number of studies that indicate teacher domination in classroom interaction (Sinclair & Coulthard, 1975; Mehan, 1979; Sinclair & Brazil, 1982). The characteristic cycle of Initiate/Respond/Feedback, is in stark contrast to the rich interactive structures of literacy learning events in the home between significant adult and child (eg: Ninio & Bruner, 1978; Snow, 1983; Tizard & Hughes, 1984; Wells, 1985, 1986). This research suggests that classroom interaction ought to mirror these structures in order to foster learning. Hall (1987) launches a generalised attack on the existence of barren class interactions. However, recent critical analyses (Hemphill & Snow, 1996) argue that while there are disparities between home and school oral and written narratives, children should be made aware of these rather than schools seeking inappropriately to model the participation structure on home environments.

The role of talk and the interrelatedness of oral and written language is nevertheless a key component in children's developing control over writing (Hall, 1989, Roberts, 1992). The work of Dyson (1982, 1983, 1986a, 1986b, 1988) is the most prolific in this area. In her close observation study of two children in journal writing time, Dyson (1988) concludes that the social relationship in which the writing became embedded was the key to writing development. In documenting the diversity of early writing processes,

Dyson (1981) suggests that early writing is only part paper and pencil activity. It is the use of speech to make meaning that enables writing to take place and to develop. Hence, "talk is an integral part of beginning to write, providing both meaning and, for some children, the systematic means for getting that meaning on paper" (Dyson, 1981, p. 783). Thus, research has begun to embrace the social dimension alongside studying the process and product of writing development.

Geekie and Raban (1993) observed young children learning to write in the classroom, with the teacher/child dialogue as the unit of analysis. They studied the evolution of the roles and content of talk as children gained in competence and independence in writing. The importance of this comparatively small field of study is that research on children's writing has developed from focusing on the written product, to the processes involved while engaged in writing composition, through to the social and oral context surrounding the construction of the written product. As Cairney (1992) encapsulates, "clearly children do not simply learn language by osmosis. Children learn about language in environments where they can read, write and talk about reading and writing" (p. 20). Thus the three language processes separated through the decades, achieve important interrelated status. This increasing interest in the role of talk in literacy, and more specifically writing development within schooling, provides the impetus for the analysis of the Reading Recovery lesson in this thesis.

However, while it is important to recognise the role of talk in literacy learning, complexities arise when oral text is used to specify that which is to become written text. All language is the vehicle of mediation between teacher, child and the writing process. Simultaneously, talk is used to articulate the written mode. Kress (1982) argues that "the structure of writing is fundamentally distinct from that of speech. To start with, the child is faced with the problems of learning a quite new syntactic, semantic

and textual unit, the sentence" (p. 35). This is in keeping with Vygotsky's proposal that oral and written speech are separate linguistic functions. They differ in both functional purpose and structure.

Kress further argues that writing cannot be regarded as speech written down with additional conventions of handwriting and punctuation, and portends that "the assumption that by learning to write the symbols arranged and spaced correctly, the child is learning to write, or that creating 'the written equivalent of his spoken language' is what is involved in the learning of writing, is a grotesque misconception" (p. 60). In other words, children have to learn to 'speak' like written language in order to articulate each sentence to be written down, rather than uttering a sustained, linguistically complex narrative of an event or story. Kress's (1982) basic point is that the sentence is not the unit of oral language, but of written language and therefore "...perhaps the major part of learning to write consists in the mastery of the linguistic unit of sentence" (p.70). Cummings (1989) also identifies the sentence as a "recurring problem in teaching writing" (p.6), as it is not a unit typical of spoken language.

Nevertheless, even though in writing there are requirements of learning a different 'script' with different syntax and static prompters (punctuation etc.), "as children develop as visual symbolisers, talk is an accompaniment to and then an organiser of their symbolic action" (Dyson, 1985, p. 5); in this case writing. These two functions of talk must be borne simultaneously in mind. When there is interaction during the production of a written text, talk is woven in and out of that text both as oral narrative and as a verbal pre-transcription of the written text.

In Reading Recovery lessons, teacher and child work together to orally compose a sentence which is frequently repeated and committed to memory. Attention can then be diverted fully to the transcriptional aspects

of that text. This procedure is embedded within the flow of interaction surrounding the act of composing and writing the text.

The third aspect of this chapter is necessary to explain the nature of the theoretical positions which govern the basis of lesson analysis in this thesis. The focal theory extends the discussion thus far by uniting the cognitive aspect (product/process) with the social aspect (talk/mediation) of literacy development.

4.3 Scaffolding as Focal Theory

As has been discussed in this thesis, most of the research on Reading Recovery has been concerned with its effectiveness in terms of pupil attainment in comparison with non-tutored children. Part of this thesis aims to balance this preoccupation, by looking at the processes of the Reading Recovery lesson, focusing specifically on the writing episode. This seemed a daunting task initially, as many of the procedures of Reading Recovery lessons are detailed in Clay (1985) and more recently in two volumes (Clay, 1993a, 1993b). This detail suggests the possibility that the structure of lessons conforms to a given format and therefore research into the processes may serve only to recognise the predetermined procedures.

During the process of planning, data collection and conducting analyses for this thesis, important publications bearing direct relation to elements in this thesis were produced in parallel in the USA. Pilot study research for this thesis began in 1992. Lyons, Pinnell and DeFord (1993) and *Literacy, Teaching and Learning, An International Journal of Early Literacy* (1994) have documented research on Reading Recovery in a similar way to the intention here. Theoretical perspectives similar to that presented here, are also found in these two recent publications.

A constructivist perspective of literacy learning has been presented. The importance of the mediating role of adults and of purposeful talk were highlighted in the previous section. Linking the discussion on writing development and talk, this section recognises the importance of the social context which fosters literacy and thereby cognitive development. Ferreiro and Teberosky's study functions within the Piagetian arena in which the child operating independently, is central to analysis. This study embodies a Vygotskian perspective, highlighted by Bruner's (1986) theories, which emphasises the collaborative nature of the literacy learning process.

Hence, it is "the unique form of co-operation between the child and the adult that is the central element of the educational process", (Moll, 1990, p. 3). This is the essence of Vygotsky's theory in that he maintained that the social organisation of instruction is the essential focus of learning; the parts cannot be extrapolated, (Vygotsky, 1986). That is, it is the interactional processes that are at the heart of all learning within a socially defined context.

Thus all social learning is open to observational investigation. In order to develop a framework by which to discuss and analyse the processes within the Reading Recovery lesson, it is necessary to examine the literature on scaffolding as a theoretical focus. This is linked with Vygotskian thought.

4.3.1 Scaffolding

Now much used, and often incorrectly applied, the term scaffolding has been previously applied to Reading Recovery (Clay & Cazden, 1988; Lyons, Pinnell & DeFord, 1993). While Cazden (1988) regarded Reading Recovery as an example of scaffolded instruction, she did not elaborate on the concept itself nor the possible types of scaffolding.

Vygotsky provides a critique of traditional psychological approaches which view children's behaviour and learning as merely reactive, and that of reductionism, which assumes the linear accumulation of psychological mechanisms in educational terms. Hence, through his work, Vygotsky launches a critical view on certain educational practices. Berk and Winsler (1995) provide a succinct account of Vygotsky's major works, relating his theories to practice in early childhood settings.

The concept of 'scaffold' was coined by Wood, Bruner and Ross (1976) as a description of interactional support. It is a term that has come to encompass Vygotsky's theoretical constructs of social interaction, and his learning construct, the zone of proximal development. In Wood, Bruner and Ross's (1976) study, thirty three to five year olds were tutored in a one-to-one problem solving task which involved building a pyramid out of interlocking wooden blocks. Based on observational data, the authors described the tutorial interactions as 'scaffolding'; "It (problem-solving) involves a kind of 'scaffolding' process that enables a child or novice to solve a problem, carry out a task or achieve a goal which would be beyond his unassisted efforts" (p. 96). Edwards and Mercer (1987) also used the term scaffolding to describe the task of creating, through joint action and talk, a contextual framework in which learning and knowledge acquisition can occur.

Such a scaffold metaphor could imply a rigid structure imposed on the child. However, the term is most widely used as a notion of effective structuring which maintains an holistic view of the task with children's involvement in the purpose of the activity. Rogoff (1990) views that "involvement in the overall process and purpose of the activity, in a manageable and supported form, gives children a chance to see how steps fit together and to participate in aspects of the activity that reflect the overall goals, gaining both skill and a vision of how and why the activity

works"(p. 95). In relation to mediation, Cairney (1992) identifies multiple adult roles in the complex scaffolding process in which control over learning is not taken from the child and in which meaning and purpose are of central concern; "above all, scaffolding is a response to another individual's attempts to learn and make meaning" (p. 28).

Beed, Hawkins and Roller (1991) outline several types of scaffolding. Contingent scaffolding is characterised by turn taking interaction between child and teacher. Other types mentioned are incidental scaffolding, such as the type of learning situation researched by Wells (1986), and support strategic scaffolding, a term used to describe, for example, the work of Ninio and Bruner (1978). Beed, Hawkins and Roller (1991) outline features common to incidental and support strategic scaffolding.

1. There exists a collaborative context in which is acknowledged the accrued competence of the child.
2. Adult and child operate on the child's zone of proximal development.
3. There is a gradual withdrawal of support with the child assuming increasing responsibility with the onset of the internalisation of knowledge leading to independence.

Strategic scaffolding is characterised by the adult deliberately teaching strategies to lead the child to competency of a given task. Incidental scaffolding is characterised by building on the child's overt intention within a shared, functional learning environment. What patterns exist in Reading Recovery lessons and can they be conceptualised as strategic scaffolding?

Bruner and Ratner (1978) identify features of effective scaffolding, rather than types of scaffolding. They suggest elements such as a familiar semantic domain, predictable structures, role reversibility, variability and

playfulness. Bruner's concept was thus built on by other researchers such as Scollon (1976), Cazden (1979) and Graves (1983). It is a mechanism by which to understand child/adult interactions whereby "the active, initiating child stays in control of the language and the experience while the adult operates effectively in response to the child," (Searle, 1984, p. 480). Can this then be applied to Reading Recovery lessons to help describe the interactive framework embedded in a seemingly prescriptive lesson pattern?

Searle (1984) argues that the concept of scaffold can be misapplied, while Engestrom (1986) questions the theoretical basis of scaffolding as a means for explaining the learning process: "The idea of scaffolding is restricted to the acquisition of the given" and further states that "scaffold as an instructional model cannot account for the mental leap to a new idea" (p. 108). However, scaffold as a concept is concerned with the *process* not a given product, outcome or predetermined achievement; the 'ongoingness' rather than the goal which Engestrom focuses on.[3]

Cazden (1982) argues that Reading Recovery does not consist of authentic literacy events as it is governed by the teacher not the child. Yet, Gaffney and Anderson (1991) state that Reading Recovery may appear teacher-driven but is in fact child-driven with the teacher responding to information provided by the child. This is a bold assertion and the analysis of observation data in this thesis may serve to support or refute this statement which is unsupported by other research. In relation to this, McClure (1986) recognises the inherent nature of teacher-child discourse practices, referring specifically to writing tasks; "these discourse structures reflect (and re-enact) the 'asymmetry' of knowledge and status which

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[3]It is evident in Vygotsky's (1987) translation that the meaning in his Russian language is Thinking and Speech, and not Thought and Language as it is interpreted, ie: a process not a product.

usually exists between adults and children in general. This suggests that the ways in which teachers interact with pupils during writing sessions...reflect more general constraints placed on teachers and children by the social organisation and prevailing views of children as learners" (p. 9 - 10).

4.3.2 Zone of Proximal Development

Inherent within the concept of scaffold, which refers to a social interactive teaching process within a socially defined context, is Vygotsky's notion of the zone of proximal development. Individual development is mediated by interaction with people who are more skilled in the use of society's tools, in this case literacy. There have been several reviews of the literature on scaffolding in the Zone of Proximal Development (Rogoff, 1986, 1990). From these, the following features have emerged and are described in detail in Wood and Wood (1996).

- Tutors provide a 'bridge' between the learner's existing level of skill and the new task.
- By providing help in the context of the learner's own activity, the tutor provides a structure to support the learner's own problem-solving.
- The learner plays an active role in problem-solving from the very beginning.
- Responsibility for regulating the activity is gradually passed from tutor to learner.

Clay and Cazden (1990) have applied these features to their analysis of children learning to read in Reading Recovery. Can the practice of teaching writing in Reading Recovery be similarly assessed as scaffolded assistance?

Vygotsky proposed the concept of the 'zone of proximal development' and defined it as "the distance between the actual developmental level as determined by independent problem solving and the level of potential development as determined through problem solving under adult guidance or in collaboration with more capable peers" (p.86). Moll (1990) interprets this concept as not just a "clever instructional heuristic" but a "key theoretical construct" (p. 4). Within the domain of writing and reading development particularly it is all too easy to misinterpret this construct (Stone, 1993). It can be misconceptualised as the teaching or assessing of discrete skills as for example, when it is applied to some classroom techniques which seem to fulfil the criteria which could be defined as follows:

- first establish the level of difficulty
- then provide assisted performance
- finally, give feedback and evaluate how to lead to the next level of performance.

Hence, "it appears that the term scaffolding is being used to justify some longstanding...and questionable classroom interaction patterns" (Searle, 1984, p. 481). Searle argues that the characteristics of schooling, with few opportunities for child initiation, promote poor environments for scaffolding to work in its original conception. The teacher as builder views the child as deficient and the child must operate within predetermined structures.

The zone of proximal development has thus served to legitimise a skills perspective as an authentic procedure for literacy development; "This reductionism is hardly what Vygotsky had in mind" (Moll, 1990, p. 7). Clay and Cazden (1990), in their Vygotskiian interpretation of Reading Recovery, apply the zone of proximal development to *instruction* and diagnosis, whereas Vygotsky's application was to the *learning*.

The zone of proximal development cannot be taken out of context as a justification for instructional practice. The purpose of identifying a zone of proximal development is that it is not just a transfer of skill but the process of mediation which provides opportunities for the learner to collaborate, to create and to make sense in order to learn. It can be seen therefore that the zone of proximal development must be viewed in Vygotsky's whole theoretical system rather than merely applied to an instructional technique.

4.4 Conclusion

Vygotsky placed a lot of emphasis on the nature of social interaction. The essential role of the teacher in Vygotskian terms is in mediation. This sits within Vygotsky's microgenetic level of development in which moment-to-moment learning by individuals in particular problem-solving contexts is rooted in their sociocultural context. Cognitive development is dependent on children's interactions with significant others in specific problem-solving environments; the nature of social transaction is central to the concept of a zone of proximal development. Palincsar (1986) emphasises the role of dialogue in this social interaction. This element then constitutes an important aspect of the Reading Recovery lesson analysis in order to determine the nature of instruction, whether teacher or child driven, and the significance or effect of this, and consequently whether the construct of scaffold in its fullest meaning can be applied to Reading Recovery procedures as Clay and Cazden maintain.

For Vygotsky the context in which mediation occurs is of vital importance. Gregory (1992) defined three interlocking contexts in her psychosemiotic framework pertaining to children's literacy development. The *situational context* is context-specific discourse within a social site (e.g. Reading Recovery room) with interpersonal relationships attached (teacher and

child). The *interpretational context* or context of the mind is the mental frame of knowledge, i.e., what counts as reading and writing in the teacher's and child's mind. The *textual context* is the specific site or text language in which interaction is positioned. The writing or storybook are specific sites within the wider frame of a Reading Recovery lesson within a school context. Research has indicated the unidirectional nature of most classroom adult/child interactions. However, it is hypothesised that richer interactive events will be identified in the context of the writing episode of the Reading Recovery lesson, which support the transition to children's independence in literacy tasks.

PART III CHILDREN'S WRITING DEVELOPMENT AND THEIR UNDERSTANDINGS OF LITERACY

CHAPTER FIVE

THE EFFECT OF READING RECOVERY ON CHILDREN'S WRITING

5.1 Background to the Study

5.1.1 Introduction

In Chapter Three the efficacy of the Reading Recovery programme was critically discussed. In this part of the thesis, the transfer of writing skills to the classroom context will be explored. By contrast with the support provided within the Reading Recovery lesson, in the classroom, intensive adult support is no longer present and children are required to operate as independently as possible. Assessing children's writing produced in the classroom enables the effectiveness of Reading Recovery to be seen in real terms. Children may be able to operate on text strategically and with increasing independence while in the presence of an adult with whom they interact exclusively and daily, but whether they are able to use and apply their increasing knowledge in unsupported contexts has not been previously documented.

5.1.2 Analysis of Writing Development

Hall (1989) maintains that it is important to examine the processes which accompany text production; analysis of the product alone is inadequate to

an understanding of how children write. The instrument used in this study to assess children's writing development focuses mainly on the transcriptional features of the product. These features are sometimes referred to in the literature as the secretarial features of writing. Elements of writing in this definition include handwriting, punctuation and layout on the page. This study of children's writing in the classroom recognises the limited scope of predominantly focusing on the product. It is only one part of a comprehensive assessment that could be established. However, the study of the writing processes within the Reading Recovery lesson (Chapters Seven and Eight) complements this by looking at context of production and interaction in detail.

Beard (1984) states that "once a piece of writing has been completed by a child, it is normally only possible to infer the composing processes that went into it" (p. 116), and therefore it is necessary to gain insights using holistic assessments. However, it is not as easy to find any standardised criteria for assessing writing as it is for reading (Pinsent, 1990). Assessment of writing has often focussed on quantitative measures. These include spelling and punctuation error analysis, word counts and mean sentence length calculations. Frequency analysis can give an indication of children's mastery of conventions and increased fluency and accuracy in writing as they become more experienced writers. However, frequency analysis does not measure quality of writing. Cooper (1977) suggests basing assessment either on overall impressions or scaled in some way. Qualitative assessments can be scaled using descriptive criteria (e.g. Wilkinson, Barnsley, Hanna & Swann, 1980). Clay's (1975) original twelve principles, while essentially descriptive, have been used to evaluate children's writing by Vukelich and Golden (1984) and Schrader (1990). However, most studies in this field are devoted to older children's writing and focus on aspects of language structure, fluency and semantics (e.g., Linek, 1991).

The aim of this part of the research was to examine the effect of Reading Recovery on children's independent writing. In order to explore this the research question proposed is:

> What is the effect of Reading Recovery on children's writing as assessed through samples of daily work in classrooms?

More specific questions stem from this. These are:

> What progress do children make in writing over the course of the school year in which they receive Reading Recovery?
>
> Do children in the Reading Recovery group make more progress than children in the comparison group?

5.2 Methodology

5.2.1 *The Sample*

As this is the first chapter in which the empirical work is reported, the sampling procedure for all three studies in the thesis is outlined here. For parts of the research a suitable comparison to children in Reading Recovery was needed to compare the progress of children participating in the intervention with those whose only literacy work in school was in the classroom. The sample was drawn from the Reading Recovery evaluation by Sylva and Hurry (1995). All the schools in seven inner and outer London LEAs with qualified teachers administering Reading Recovery were involved in their study. In addition, a sample of Reading Recovery schools in Surrey was included. The LEAs were asked to identify matched schools for comparison purposes. Within the selected schools children were

included in the study on the basis of their reading ability as measured by the Reading Recovery Diagnostic Survey administered by a teacher or researcher trained in the use of this assessment battery. The six children in each school with the poorest scores in the age range six years to six years six months were chosen to take part in the evaluation (Sylva & Hurry, 1995, for a fuller description).

Participating children in this research were drawn from a sub-sample of eight Reading Recovery schools and six comparison schools in five LEAs. The schools used were randomly selected from those in the larger evaluation (Sylva & Hurry, 1995). Table 5.1 shows the sampling procedure for each part of the research. It was important to use a number of teacher-child dyads in a variety of schools and L.E.A.s in order to increase the generalisability of the findings. Despite the extensive geographical area, all writing data collection, interviews and observations were carried out by the researcher for the purposes of this thesis.

Table 5.1 Sample Size for Each Component of the Research

	Reading Recovery	Comparison	TOTAL
TOTAL	34	36	70
Writing Product	32	32	64
Interview	34	36	70
Lesson Observation	19	-	19

In the study reported in this chapter on writing outcomes, all 70 children were initially in the study; those from whom it was not possible to collect samples of writing from their classroom contexts during the year were eliminated from the study. At the end there were 32 Reading Recovery children and 32 children in the comparison group.

5.2.2 The Diagnostic Survey (Clay, 1985)

The Diagnostic Survey and Running Record of Book Level (Clay, 1985) have been used to identify and monitor children in need of intensive literacy support and as a research instrument in comparative studies to assess entry and exit levels of attainment. Children in the Reading Recovery and comparison groups were administered the Diagnostic Survey which is the normal procedure for entry to Reading Recovery and here used as a means of comparison. The Reading Recovery group received Reading Recovery lessons while the comparison group had no specific intervention. In this study, any differences found in writing development between the two groups is of heightened importance if it can be shown that the two groups did not differ at outset. This is discussed later.

All diagnostic tests were administered in September 1992 by a team trained to deliver the survey as part of Sylva and Hurry's (1995) evaluation of the implementation of Reading Recovery in England. The Diagnostic Survey comprises five sub-tests, as presented in more detail in Chapter 3.

(1) *Letter Identification*: the number of upper-case and lower-case letters of the alphabet correctly identified. Scores range between 0-54.

(2) *Concepts about Print*: assesses children's understanding of the conventions of written language such as directionality, concepts of letter and word. Scores range between 0-24.

(3) *Word Test*: the number of frequently occurring words that can be read out of context. Scores range between 0-15.

(4) *Writing Vocabulary*: the number of words that can be written independently in ten minutes.

(5) *Dictation*: the number of sounds appropriately represented when writing a sentence from dictation is scored ranging between 0-37.

In addition a score is given for Book Level:

(6) *Book Level*: a graded series of books is used to assess the highest level at which a child can read accurately which is normally defined as 90% accuracy using a running record. Levels range from 0-24.

The children in this study scored in the bottom 20% of their class on the Diagnostic Survey and received Reading Recovery if they were in a school offering this programme.

Reliability and Validity of the Diagnostic Survey

The Diagnostic Survey is a useful tool for identifying children who are the poorest readers and most in need of intensive support (Clay, 1985). It is also useful for evaluating the outcome of interventions due to its comprehensive nature. There is some evidence relating to the necessary qualities of reliability and validity of some of the sub-tests in the Diagnostic Survey.

Dictation (Pinnell, DeFord & Lyons, 1991) and Book Level (Clay, 1985) have been shown to meet the usual criteria of reliability and validity. The Word Test is very similar to other tests of reading vocabulary which have been used in other Reading Recovery research (e.g., Dolch Word Recognition Tests, Burt Graded Word Test), whose reliability and validity have been established (Sylva & Hurry, 1995).

Sylva and Hurry (1995) found that the Diagnostic Survey was a sensitive measure of early literacy skills for the ability range of children in the sample. Further, they identified the Diagnostic Survey as the measure with the greatest predictive validity. The Diagnostic Survey correlated very well with other standardised measures of reading a year later.

Reading Recovery children in this study were assessed by their Reading Recovery teacher or Local Authority tutor and by a trained researcher for the national evaluation study (Sylva & Hurry, 1995). The scores used in this research are those assessed by the trained researcher in order to match those collected for children in the comparison group. This method ensures consistency of administration across schools.

It is necessary to make this distinction as there may be some concern raised over the reliability of the Book Level on the basis of Glynn et al's (1989) finding that when children were assessed by their Reading Recovery teacher they generally scored two or three levels higher than when they were tested by a researcher. In the present study, a comparison between children's post-test Book Levels as measured by the researchers and the Levels given them by their Reading Recovery teachers revealed differences of the same order as that reported by Glynn et al. It was also observed that these children scored lower on the writing vocabulary task when assessed by a researcher as opposed to their Reading Recovery teacher.

The discrepancy on the Book Level task may not be necessarily attributable to problems of reliability. Reading Recovery teachers always introduce books to children first before they ask the children to read and this is not the case when researchers assess Book Level. Thus the task is possibly made slightly easier for children by their Reading Recovery teacher and could be expected to increase their ability to perform the task. With the

discrepancy in the writing vocabulary task, the higher score achieved with the Reading Recovery teacher, would appear to be the more accurate measure of the child's true ability. Reading Recovery assessors and researchers had access to the child's bank of known words and could use this to prompt for the writing text. While there is no difference between teacher and researcher administration of this test, if children are not quite at ease they may give an under representation of their true abilities.

5.2.3 Procedure

Samples of classroom writing were randomly collected from the children's everyday exercise books. The samples were collected from periods throughout the school year for children in the Reading Recovery and comparison groups. As data collection was random and as classes varied in the opportunities for children to write independently, the number of samples per child varied considerably. It was necessary to collect unaided samples in order to investigate what children could write independently and whether children in the Reading Recovery group could transfer their acquired skills and strategies to classroom situations.

Phases of data collection

It was decided to divide the year into four phases covering the span of the dated samples. One piece of writing per child was then allocated to each phase. A file was subsequently created for each school with each child's four pieces of dated writing in chronological order, resulting in approximately 250 samples.

This sampling procedure created an excess of writing samples and a selection of these were used as 'dummy' samples in order to pilot the writing tool and to train a second rater. In some cases there were missing

data where there was no writing available for a particular phase. These children were retained in the sample and the N for the appropriate phase was adjusted accordingly. The total number of writing samples available for each phase for both groups are shown in Table 5.6 (p.119).

5.2.4 Scale for assessing children's writing

In order to assess these samples of writing it was important to design an instrument which reflected the writing process as a whole, taking account of the transcriptional aspect and the composing aspect of writing.

Structure of the Scale

Features for the writing scale were adopted mainly from Clay (1985). There are few scaled instruments for assessing young children's writing. Other than Clay (1985) none exists as a comprehensive entity. Possible components were found in the work of Linek (1991) and Goodman, Goodman and Hood (1989) for sentence structure; Ellis and Cataldo (1990) for spelling and Beers and Beers (1981) for stages of spelling; Arnold's (1991) criteria for older children, and Pinsent's (1990) proposed criteria for error analysis for free writing.

Using Clay's (1985) as a basis, the final instrument (Appendix II, p. 355) was designed. It has five dimensions: Language Level, Message Quality, Directional Principles, Vocabulary, Spelling Strategy, with Levels 1 to 6 for each. Three of the dimensions were drawn from Clay (language level, message quality and directional principles). Two were added, namely vocabulary and spelling strategy. Three of the dimensions, language level, directional principles, and spelling strategy focus on the secretarial features of writing. Message quality and vocabulary are concerned with the content of writing.

Language level records the highest level of linguistic organisation used by the child in the sample of writing. Directional principles describe the presentation of the writing. Correct direction, text-spacing and arranging are an intrinsic part of teaching in the Reading Recovery writing episode, even while the construction of a message is the main focus of the task. The levelling of message quality requires a 'best fit' description applied to the writing sample and is concerned with the child's knowledge of communicating in writing. These three dimensions are classified in Clay (1985, p. 35).

Criteria for spelling strategy were drawn from research on children's writing which map possible routes to standard spelling (e.g. Gentry, 1982, cited in Temple, Nathan & Burris, 1982). This dimension monitors the level of spelling from letter string representations to hearing initial sounds in words to representing sequential sounds and achieving correct spelling. The vocabulary dimension was adapted from the work of Arnold (1991) for older children and is only one aspect of a broad assessment applied. It was included in the scale as a measure of the compositional aspect of writing. The levels of this dimension are explained here. Level one is that which represents oral-like rather than text-like language. This dimension is concerned with the ability to use written vocabulary. Level two is the use of very simple known words, while Level three is writing which is mainly descriptive, often repeating the same verbs or conjunctives. Level four includes some adjectives and Levels five and six pertain to samples that are comprehensive and well written with a more varied vocabulary.

Reliability and Validity of the Scale

Clay (1985) suggests rating three samples of writing from the same time period in order for the assessment to be sufficiently reliable. In this study,

the scale was applied to one sample of writing at each phase. However, each sample was scored twice. Each of the approximately 250 samples of writing was scored on each of the five dimensions of the writing scale by the researcher. This procedure was repeated on each of the 250 samples of writing by a second rater, a primary teacher, who was blind to the Reading Recovery/Comparison group distinction. Agreement between the two raters for scoring the samples of writing was established statistically using kappa as the measure of inter-rater reliablity. This test of association measures whether there is strong or weak agreement with above .75 indicating strong agreement. Results for each dimension are shown in Table 5.2.

Table 5.2 Inter-rater Reliability for Writing Scale

DIMENSION	k
Language Level	0.62
Message Quality	0.69
Directional Principles	0.83
Vocabulary	0.85
Spelling Strategy	0.90

There was strong inter-rater reliability for three dimensions, directional principles, vocabulary and spelling strategy. Agreement was sufficiently reliable for language level and message quality. Although these two dimensions were employed from Clay (1985), they may be more ambiguous

features of writing to score. As a comprehensive scale, the inter-rater reliability outcomes suggest that it is a consistent measure when repeatedly applied to data.

The difficulty with designing an instrument that reflects the transcriptional and compositional aspects of young children's writing has already been discussed. This scale is used to assess only the product. Its dimensions mainly focus on the observable secretarial features of writing. The content and face validity is reflected in the relevance of the criteria which are largely substantiated by Clay (1985). Given the paucity of suitable assessment scales for early writing, no predictive validity is yet established. However, this study seeks in part to remedy this aspect. While the scale may not encompass all aspects of writing, analysis of the data indicates that the levels embrace an appropriate range for every dimension, enabling progress to be successfully monitored over time.

Application of the Scale

To illustrate application of the writing assessment scale, 'dummy' samples are used here, i.e. excess samples not used in the main analysis. These and other 'dummy' samples were also used for inter-rater training before inter-rater reliability was established for each dimension. In order to preserve originality the child's actual writing is included as vital features can be lost in a typescript copy. Figures 5.1 and 5.2 contain two samples of children's writing at different points time. Table 5.3 presents the respective scoring.

*Table 5.3 Writing Scale Scoring for Susan and Sam**

Language Level	Message Quality	Directional Principles	Vocabulary	Spelling Strategy
Susan, Figure 5.1				
2	2	4	3	2
Sam, Figure 5.2				
6	6	6	5	6

*All names used in this thesis are pseudonyms.

I went shopping and kevin was very naughty.

16 NOV 1992

Good girl

16 NOV 1992

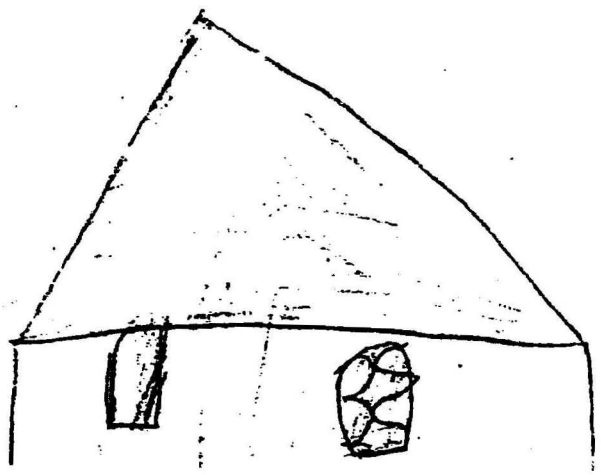

Figure 5.1 Writing sample for Susan

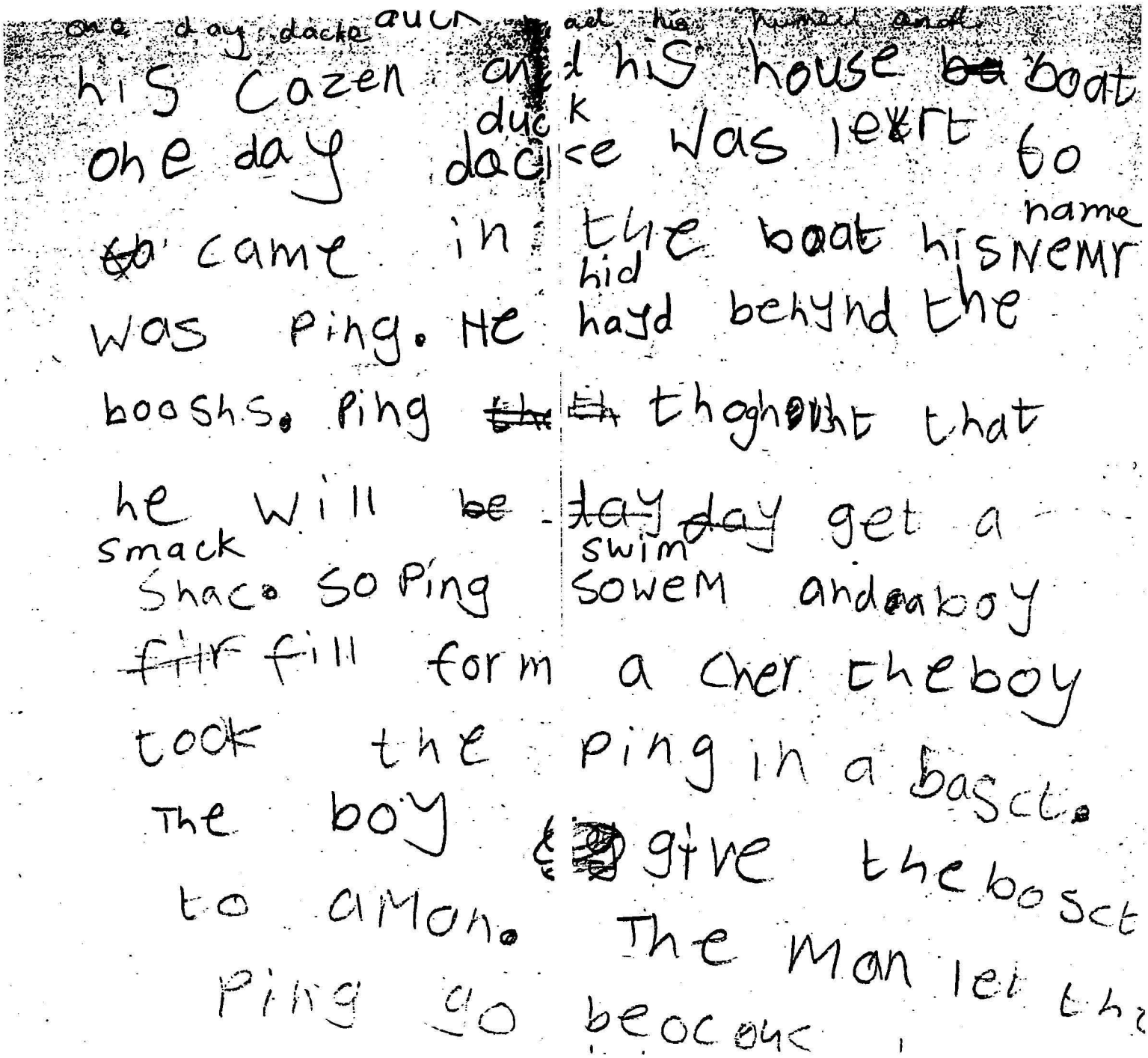

Figure 5.2 Writing sample for Sam

5.3 Findings

Descriptive and statistical analyses were applied as follows. Mean entry and exit scores on the Diagnostic Survey were calculated for both groups. The entry scores on the sub-tests were standardised in order to ascertain whether there was a significant difference between the two groups at the beginning of the study. The writing sample data were scored using the writing scale (Appendix II) and descriptive and statistical analyses were applied.

5.3.1 Diagnostic Survey Data

Table 5.4 summarises the Diagnostic Survey data for this study at pre and post intervention testing. Children in the Reading Recovery group scored significantly more than children in the comparison group on each sub-test at the terminal assessment. While children in the comparison group show improvements as to be expected, these are not as substantial as those of children in the Reading Recovery programme.

Table 5.4 ***Mean Diagnostic Survey Scores for children in Reading Recovery and Comparison groups***

	READING RECOVERY		COMPARISON	
	Initial	Terminal	Initial	Terminal
Book Level (maximum=26)	1.0	15.91	0.47	7.25
Letter Identification (maximum=54)	34.94	51.28	36.34	46.94
Concepts About Print (maximum=24)	11.69	18.91	11.47	15.1
Dictation (maximum=37)	11.38	32.22	9.66	22
Writing Vocabulary	5.81	49.47	4.66	19.63
Word Test (maximum=15)	2.03	11.1	1.91	6.44

5.3.2 Baseline Scores

Here we are concerned with entry scores to show that the two groups were not significantly different at outset. The means and standard deviations were calculated for each group. This was done for the full sample and also for the children in the writing sample only. The measures, which are on different scales with differing means, were z-score standardised so that direct comparison can be made. Table 5.5 shows the mean, T value and significance for the z scores (standardised) for each test for the children in the writing study sample (n=64). This is presented in this way because the scores were also summed and compared across tests. (Table 5.4 indicates the raw score means to indicate size on the scale.) There were no significant differences at outset on baseline scores between the two groups in the writing sample.

Table 5.5 ***T Value for Diagnostic Survey Scores for children in Reading Recovery and Comparison groups in the writing sample***

Group	Test	Mean**	T	p*
RR Comparison	Book level	.0549 -.0549	.44	n.s.
RR Comparison	Letter identification	.0560 -.0560	.45	n.s.
RR Comparison	Concepts about Print	.0372 -.0372	.30	n.s.
RR Comparison	Word test	.0256 -.0256	.20	n.s.
RR Comparison	Writing vocabulary	.1406 -.1406	1.13	n.s.
RR Comparison	Dictation	.1044 -.1044	.83	n.s.

n.s. = Not Significant

* p>0.05

** Equal sized Reading Recovery and comparison groups produce identical but oppositely signed group means, due to overall mean z-score of zero.

5.3.3 Descriptive statistics

Frequencies of occurrence were calculated as percentages for each level, dimension and phase for Reading Recovery and comparison groups, and are presented in Table 5.6. (overleaf). This procedure enables comparisons to be made where there are missing data.

(Text continues on page 124)

Table 5.6 ***Percentages of Sample at Each Level for Each Dimension of the Writing Scale***

Language Level

	Reading Recovery		*Comparison*	
PHASE 1 (Autumn)	Totals	Percentage	Totals	Percentage
Level 1	10	31.25	14	51.85
Level 2	5	15.63	1	3.70
Level 3	7	21.88	3	11.11
Level 4	7	21.88	2	7.41
Level 5	2	6.25	7	25.93
Level 6	1	3.13	0	0.00
	32		27	
PHASE 2 (early Spring)				
Level 1	2	6.45	7	24.14
Level 2	4	12.90	2	6.99
Level 3	5	16.13	3	10.34
Level 4	4	12.90	4	13.79
Level 5	12	38.71	8	27.59
Level 6	4	12.90	5	17.24
	31		29	
PHASE 3 (late Spring)				
Level 1	0	0.00	4	13.33
Level 2	0	0.00	0	0.00
Level 3	4	12.90	3	10.00
Level 4	3	9.68	5	16.66
Level 5	15	48.39	8	26.66
Level 6	9	29.03	10	33.33
	31		30	
PHASE 4 (Summer)				
Level 1	0	0.00	4	14.81
Level 2	0	0.00	0	0.00
Level 3	0	0.00	0	0.00
Level 4	1	3.23	4	14.81
Level 5	10	32.26	5	18.52
Level 6	20	64.52	14	51.85
	31		27	

Table 5.6 *(continued)*

Message Quality

	Reading Recovery		*Comparison*	
PHASE 1 (Autumn)	Totals	Percentage	Totals	Percentage
Level 1	5	15.63	11	40.74
Level 2	17	53.13	7	25.93
Level 3	5	15.63	5	18.52
Level 4	2	6.25	3	11.11
Level 5	3	9.38	1	3.70
Level 6	0	0.00	0	0.00
	32		27	
PHASE 2 (early Spring)				
Level 1	0	0.00	1	3.45
Level 2	7	22.58	14	48.28
Level 3	4	12.90	2	6.99
Level 4	14	45.16	7	24.14
Level 5	5	16.13	5	17.24
Level 6	1	3.23	0	0.00
	31		29	
PHASE 3 (late Spring)				
Level 1	0	0.00	0	0.00
Level 2	1	3.23	7	23.33
Level 3	0	0.00	5	16.66
Level 4	15	48.39	10	33.33
Level 5	12	38.71	7	23.33
Level 6	3	9.68	1	3.33
	31		30	
PHASE 4 (Summer)				
Level 1	0	0.00	0	0.00
Level 2	0	0.00	5	18.52
Level 3	1	3.23	0	0.00
Level 4	9	29.03	8	29.63
Level 5	12	38.71	10	37.04
Level 6	9	29.03	4	14.81
	31		27	

Table 5.6 *(continued)*

Directional Principles

	Reading Recovery		*Comparison*	
PHASE 1 (Autumn)	Totals	Percentage	Totals	Percentage
Level 1	4	12.50	5	18.52
Level 2	2	6.25	3	11.11
Level 3	0	0.00	0	0.00
Level 4	25	78.13	18	66.66
Level 5	0	0.00	1	3.70
Level 6	1	3.13	0	0.00
	32		27	
PHASE 2 (early Spring)				
Level 1	0	0.00	1	3.45
Level 2	1	3.23	3	10.34
Level 3	0	0.00	0	0.00
Level 4	20	64.52	17	58.62
Level 5	9	29.03	8	27.59
Level 6	1	3.23	0	0.00
	31		29	
PHASE 3 (late Spring)				
Level 1	0	0.00	0	0.00
Level 2	0	0.00	1	3.23
Level 3	0	0.00	0	0.00
Level 4	9	29.03	18	60.00
Level 5	18	58.06	11	36.66
Level 6	4	12.90	0	0.00
	31		30	
PHASE 4 (Summer)				
Level 1	0	0.00	0	0.00
Level 2	0	0.00	1	3.70
Level 3	0	0.00	0	0.00
Level 4	3	9.68	12	44.44
Level 5	14	45.16	7	25.93
Level 6	14	45.16	7	25.93
	31		27	

Table 5.6 *(continued)*

Vocabulary

	Reading Recovery		*Comparison*	
PHASE 1 (Autumn)	Totals	Percentage	Totals	Percentage
Level 1	7	21.88	8	29.63
Level 2	19	59.38	15	55.55
Level 3	5	15.69	3	11.11
Level 4	1	3.13	1	3.70
Level 5	0	0.00	0	0.00
Level 6	0	0.00	0	0.00
	32		27	
PHASE 2 (early Spring)				
Level 1	1	3.23	3	10.34
Level 2	7	22.58	14	48.28
Level 3	17	54.84	10	34.48
Level 4	6	19.35	2	6.99
Level 5	0	0.00	0	0.00
Level 6	0	0.00	0	0.00
	31		29	
PHASE 3 (late Spring)				
Level 1	0	0.00	1	3.33
Level 2	2	6.45	8	26.66
Level 3	20	64.52	18	60.00
Level 4	6	19.35	2	6.66
Level 5	3	9.68	1	3.33
Level 6	0	0.00	0	0.00
	31		30	
PHASE 4 (Summer)				
Level 1	0	0.00	0	0.00
Level 2	0	0.00	6	22.22
Level 3	15	48.39	12	44.44
Level 4	7	22.58	9	33.33
Level 5	6	19.35	0	0.00
Level 6	3	9.68	0	0.00
	31		27	

Table 5.6 *(continued)*

Spelling Strategy

	Reading Recovery		*Comparison*	
PHASE 1 (Autumn)	Totals	Percentage	Totals	Percentage
Level 1	13	40.63	17	62.96
Level 2	10	31.25	5	18.52
Level 3	3	9.38	4	14.81
Level 4	5	15.63	1	3.70
Level 5	1	3.13	0	0.00
Level 6	0	0.00	0	0.00
	32		27	
PHASE 2 (early Spring)				
Level 1	4	12.90	8	27.59
Level 2	4	16.13	6	20.69
Level 3	8	22.58	10	34.48
Level 4	8	25.81	3	10.34
Level 5	7	22.58	2	6.99
Level 6	0	0.00	0	0.00
	31		29	
PHASE 3 (late Spring)				
Level 1	1	3.23	6	20.00
Level 2	4	12.90	6	20.00
Level 3	2	6.45	5	16.66
Level 4	9	29.03	9	30.00
Level 5	15	48.39	3	10.00
Level 6	0	0.00	1	3.33
	31		30	
PHASE 4 (Summer)				
Level 1	1	3.23	4	14.81
Level 2	0	0.00	3	11.11
Level 3	2	6.45	4	14.81
Level 4	5	16.13	6	22.22
Level 5	16	51.61	7	25.93
Level 6	7	22.58	3	11.11
	31		27	

5.3.4 Discussion of descriptive statistics

First, a brief description of the pattern of attainment is presented. Next, findings are discussed for each of the five dimensions of the writing scale. In the Reading Recovery group all children progressed through the levels on each dimension. By Phase four only one child achieved Level 1 on the spelling strategy dimension. In the comparison group four children achieved Level 1 for language level and spelling strategy by Phase four.

At Phase one a typical Reading Recovery sample scored lowest on vocabulary and highest on directional principles. By Phase 4 the lowest attainment was still vocabulary and the highest generally on any of the other dimensions. For the comparison group low scores were typical on all the dimensions except for directional principles at Phase one. The highest scores were for language level. The lowest scores were for directional principles and message quality by Phase four. The highest scores were generally achieved for language level. All children in the Reading Recovery group progressed through the levels, often with a jump of two levels between Phases two and three. Many of the children in the comparison group progressed through the levels, but several continued to score very low on all dimensions through the Phases. Typically, the same level was achieved between Phases two and three.

Language Level

Through Phases one to two the scores are similarly spread in both groups. By Phase four nearly 100% of the Reading Recovery group achieve Levels 5 and 6 compared with 70% of the comparison group. While Levels 2 and 3 become obsolete at Phases three and four for both groups, approximately 15% of the comparison group still only achieve Level 1. Table 5.6 indicates that while both groups make progress, the Reading Recovery group retains

a consistent gain through Phases two to four. In the Reading Recovery group the lowest score at Phase one was Level 1 and at Phase four, Level 4. In the comparison group the lowest score at Phase one and four was Level one. The highest score for both groups at Phase one was Level 5 or 6.

Message Quality

Progress in this dimension follows a similar pattern to language level but with the Reading Recovery group scoring higher levels from Phase two, with more than 65% of the group achieving Level 4 and above. By Phase four 70% of the Reading Recovery group achieve Levels 5 and 6, while approximately 50% of the comparison group achieve these levels. Overall both groups make slower progress than scores indicate for language level. Nevertheless, as Table 5.6 indicates, the Reading Recovery group makes consistently higher gains across the phases. Although, this is a difficult dimension to score, inter-rater reliability (0.7) is sufficiently high. The range of scores for Phase one was the same for both groups with children achieving Levels 1 to 5. By Phase four the Reading Recovery scores ranged from Level 3 to Level 6 and the comparison group ranged from Level 2 to Level 6.

Directional Principles

For this dimension 78% and 67% of the Reading Recovery and comparison groups respectively, score Level 4 at Phase one. This is perhaps because directional principles are one of the more easily acquired norms of written language. At Phases three and four, the Reading Recovery group score consistently 20 percentage points higher than the comparison group for Levels 5 and 6. By Phase four almost half the comparison group are still achieving at Level 4, whilst the vast majority of Reading Recovery children

score Levels 5 or 6. This may suggest that children in the Reading Recovery group have not only mastered the direction of print, but are producing text that is correctly spaced and arranged more than children who are not in the programme.

Vocabulary

In this dimension children in both groups do not manifest as much progress as in those already discussed. Table 5.6 indicates that Level 3 is the score most likely to be achieved by both groups in all phases. While the vocabulary dimension entails difficult criteria to assess, inter-rater agreement is very strong (0.85). As with the other dimensions, while both groups improve, the Reading Recovery group retain their gain in scores with 30% of the group achieving Levels 5 and 6 by Phase four. No child achieves this in the comparison group. Thus the range at Phase one for both groups was Levels 1 to 5 or 6. By Phase four the range for the Reading Recovery group was Levels 3 to 6. The comparison group scores ranged from Level 2 to 4. This was the most marked difference in attainment out of the five dimensions.

Spelling Strategy

After Phase one, scores for this dimension show a marked difference with the Reading Recovery group achieving consistently much higher scores. The difference between the two groups becomes greater than for the other dimensions. Inter-rater agreement is very strong (0.9). By Phase four 75% of the Reading Recovery group achieve Levels 5 and 6 compared with only 37% of children not in the programme.

Summary

From the previous discussion it has been shown that message quality and vocabulary are the lowest scoring dimensions. Message quality is more ambiguous to score and vocabulary is not an area usually focussed on in early writing. Directional principles is the highest scoring at Phase one, most likely because by the age of six, most children have mastered the left to right aspect of English written language. The most powerful difference is in the success of the Reading Recovery group on spelling strategy.

The aim of Reading Recovery is to accelerate children's literacy learning with daily intensive teaching sessions. The purpose of this study was to assess Reading Recovery children's writing attainment in independent tasks. In addition the study investigated whether children experiencing the same level of difficulty but not receiving Reading Recovery made comparable progress. Analysis of the final phase revealed the shift in the distribution of scores such that for all dimensions, attainment in the Reading Recovery group is very skewed towards the upper levels (Levels 4 to 6) with a proportion of samples still in the lowest levels. In the comparison group the spread of scores at Phase four is bi-modal. This is an indication of the effectiveness of Reading Recovery in moving children on in their writing development at a brisk pace.

Preliminary descriptive statistics indicate therefore that children in Reading Recovery apply their knowledge to unaided writing tasks and make substantial gains when scored in comparison with a group not receiving Reading Recovery.

5.3.5 *Statistical analyses of differences between Reading Recovery and Comparison groups*

Several further analyses were applied to the written samples. This part of the research is a repeated measures design with two groups in which categorical measurements are the 'outcomes'. In order to apply chi-squared as a contingency analysis it was necessary to collapse the scoring and re-code the samples of writing from Levels 1 to 6 to Levels 1 to 3 for each dimension at every phase. This was done by combining Levels 1and 2, then Levels 3 and 4 and Levels 5 and 6 to make three levels. Chi-squared testing was applied in order to investigate whether the groups differed significantly in their performance on each of the five dimensions of assessment.

The results for chi-squared analysis are shown in Table 5.7 (3 levels x 2 groups). This shows that for four of the five dimensions there were significant differences between the two groups ($p < .05$, $df = 2$), for phases three **and** four. There was a statistical difference for the Language Level dimension at the fourth phase. Therefore, all five dimensions show a difference between the two groups on assessment of writing samples towards the end of the intervention.

Table 5.7 ***Chi-squared scores for differences between groups on each dimension at each phase***

DIMENSION	Phase 1	Phase 2	Phase 3	Phase 4
Language Level	5.48	1.09	4.9	8.03*
Message Quality	0.8	5.94	6.62*	6.38*
Direction	1.01	2.2	7.65*	10.84*
Vocabulary	0.16	6.64**	6.22*	14.82*
Spelling Strategy	1.92	3.95	9.6*	9.92*

* indicates $p<.05$ ($df = 2$)

** indicates $p<.05$ ($df = 1$)

In order to examine this data more precisely, Kendall's Tau was applied by reverting to the original scoring before the data was collapsed, i.e., each dimension was scored 1 - 6. With this range of scores the data would have to be quite different in order for there to be statistical significance, and therefore this test is more stringent than the previous one. Application of Kendall's Tau resulted in a very similar pattern showing that phases three and four produced a significant difference for Reading Recovery children as compared with comparison group children on all dimensions except language level (which is significant by Phase four). Outcomes for this test are presented in Table 5.8.

Table 5.8 ***Kendall's Tau T Values for Each Dimension at Each Phase***

DIMENSION	Phase 1	Phase 2	Phase 3	Phase 4
Language Level	-.50	-.67	-.76	-1.65
Message Quality	-1.15	-1.91	-3.21*	-1.87
Direction	-.84	-1.0	-3.41*	-2.90*
Vocabulary	-.68	-2.87*	-3.03*	-3.11*
Spelling Strategy	-1.83	-2.71*	-3.55*	-3.21*

*indicates $p < .05$ (df = 5)

5.3.6 Analysis in relation to the Diagnostic Survey

There were 32 children in each group in this part of the study. Appropriate analyses on several levels has shown there to be significant differences between the two groups in their writing development. In addition, the differences identified are likely to be due to the Reading Recovery intervention as it was also established that the two groups were similar at outset in terms of literacy ability.

As Table 5.5 indicates the groups were not significantly different at outset for Book Level or the five sub-tests of the Diagnostic Survey. The results of the writing assessment used in this study indicate that children in

Reading Recovery make significantly greater progress with independent writing than do children in the comparison group. Knowledge and skills gained in Reading Recovery lessons are successfully transferred to classroom writing.

Multiple regression analysis was used to establish whether there were significant differences between the two groups at each phase while controlling for baseline scores. This procedure was applied in order to find out whether the gains achieved by the Reading Recovery group were significant even when controlled for baseline scores. Although the two groups were not significantly different at outset, the Reading Recovery group scored slightly higher on all measures. This regression analysis takes account of these differences and allows an estimate of the size of the effect of Reading Recovery on writing development. Table 5.9 shows the mean difference between Reading Recovery and comparison groups after adjusting for baseline scores.

Table 5.9 ***Reading Recovery effect (Beta weights), after controlling for baseline score***

	Phase 1	Phase 2	Phase 3	Phase 4
Language Level	.002	.248	.393	.798*
Message quality	.169	.501*	.721*	.60*
Directional Principles	.252	.253	.485	.628*
Vocabulary	.047	.457	.449	.762*
Spelling Strategy	.385	.722*	.903*	1.094*

*$p<0.05$

The multiple regression analysis used index-comparison (dummy) and sum of baseline z-scores for each dimension as predictors. The regression weighting coefficient on the index-comparison dummy was interpreted as the mean Reading Recovery effect, i.e., the mean difference between the Reading Recovery group and comparison group after controlling for baseline scores. Figure 5.3 graphically illustrates this.

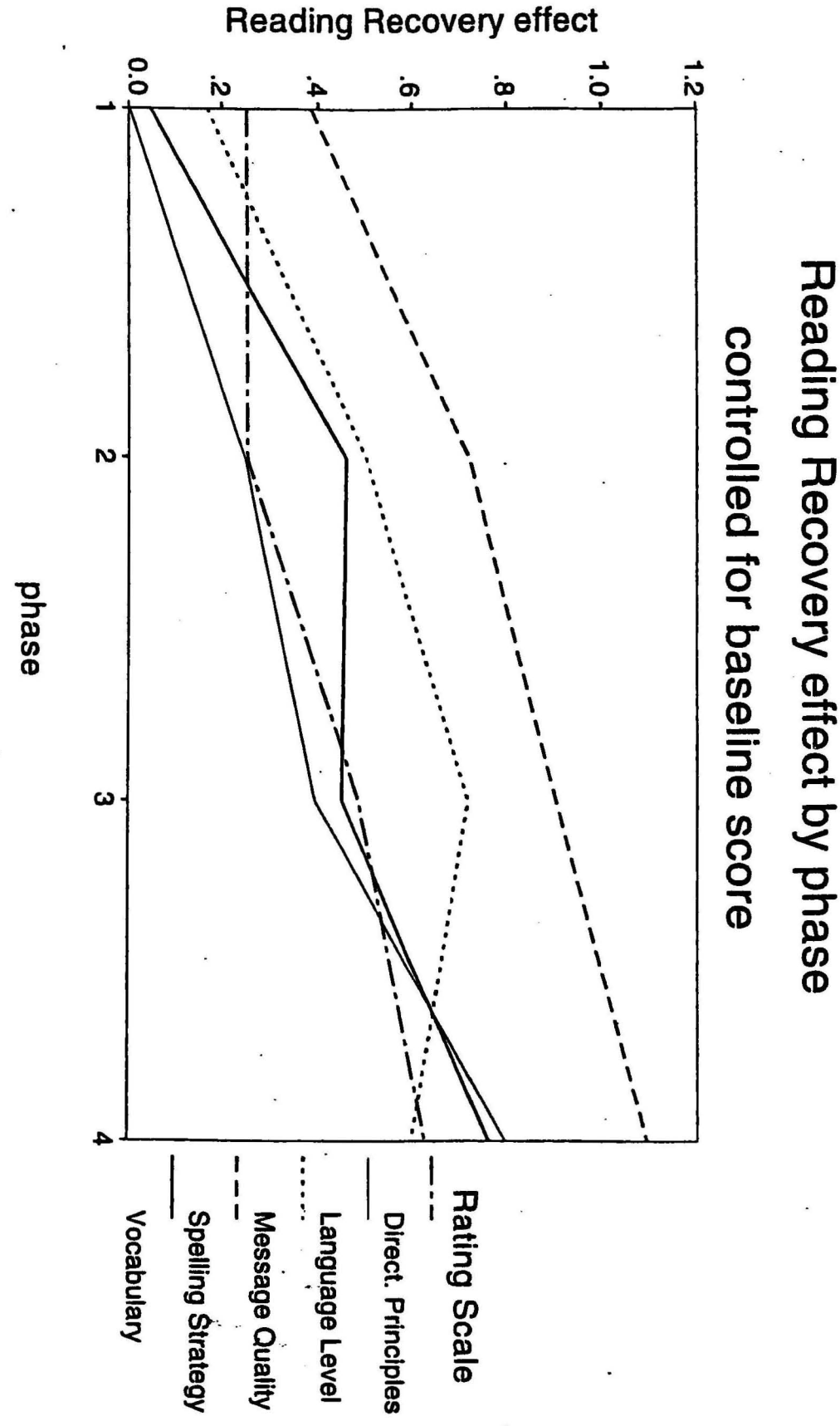

Figure 5.3 ***Reading Recovery effect by phase controlled for baseline score***

5.4 Discussion

The findings presented in this part of the report are important because to date Reading Recovery has only been shown to be successful through exit scores on a range of reading and writing tests. It could be that these measures only assess what goes on in the lesson itself. Center et al (1995) argue that the Diagnostic Survey does not provide an 'external' criterion, being too close to the programme itself. The studies discussed in Chapter Three which show Reading Recovery children maintained their gains three years after discontinuation from the programme, also used the same range of tests.

In the present study at Phase one the average score for each dimension is higher for children in the Reading Recovery group. This could be attributed to programme effects. By the time writing samples were collected within Phase one, children may have been in Reading Recovery for several weeks. However, baseline score statistics indicate that there were no significant differences between the two groups at the outset on any of the dimensions.

The analysis of the data does not document individual raw data. While there were differing rates of progress and not all the Reading Recovery children scored highly by Phase four, all children moved up the levels rather than falling back or chopping and changing between them. There were cases in the comparison group where the scores were very static and little progress was made throughout the four phases of analysis. When ratings were collapsed and writing samples scored from one to three for statistical purposes, any differences in progress might have been less visible. This was not the case and the test was still sensitive to differences in progress. With the full scoring (Levels 1 - 6) in place the differences were most evident in the latter two phases of writing assessment.

The differences between the two groups at Phases three and four are particularly striking for directional principles, vocabulary and spelling strategy. While the majority of children in both groups scored Level four at Phase one for directional principles, half the comparison group remained at this level by Phase four. Reading Recovery children were achieving Levels five or six which demands accurately spaced and well presented writing rather than just left to right directionality. In Reading Recovery, teachers train children in the spatial layout of print while engaged in the process of writing connected text. This parallel practice is consistent with the model presented by Nicholls et al (1989) which focuses on the integration of composition and performance as writing development progresses. These results indicate that children in Reading Recovery have internalised this knowledge and are able to use it when writing without support.

The dimension of spelling strategy also indicated a substantial significant difference in attainment between the two groups. While the Reading Recovery lesson contains elements of explicit phonological training and repetitive word practice using plastic letters, attention to spelling and phonological detail is also given during composition of the story. There is no predefined sequence to be followed. The teaching of spelling is derived from the immediate context and is highly individualised. Detailed continuous assessment ensures continuity with previous teaching each day. In the early stages of the programme, the teacher shares the task of spelling words correctly with the child. As the programme progresses the teacher expertly diagnoses which words and spelling patterns are to be learned or 'taken to fluency'. This study shows that the methods used in this intervention are effective in developing children's spelling ability when compared with a similar group of children not receiving training and that children apply this knowledge when writing independently in the classroom.

This study is similar in design with that reported by Kroll, Kroll and Wells (1980) in which a smaller sample of older children was used. The scale used in this research was by no means comprehensive, but as these authors state, "establishing levels of development in writing is not a simple mater of administering a few tests. Writing ability is a complex, multifaceted skill" (p. 55). Further, there are relatively few techniques or guidelines for assessing writing development in the early years when the network of knowledge and ability is in its infancy and writing products are best analysed while the child is engaged in composition.

Nevertheless the scale used in this study does seem to have been sensitive to young children with literacy learning difficulties. It is true to the spirit of the Reading Recovery programme in the nature of the dimensions used. Whether or not the significant differences are more powerful due to the Reading Recovery children being in the programme simultaneously to writing sample collection is a consideration that could be applied to future research, perhaps also monitoring classroom congruency and children's sustained progress after termination of their programme. Wade and Moore (1997) assessed Reading Recovery children's writing several years after they had been in the programme. They controlled for purpose, audience and time taken for a narrative writing task. Writing samples were assessed on measures of frequency analysis and writing level based on Bereiter's (1978) model and compared with a control group. The authors conclude that the Reading Recovery group performed significantly better in terms of accuracy and quality of writing.

The strength of the study reported here has been to show that children in Reading Recovery made significant progress in their classroom writing. This progress was significantly more than children in a comparative group who did not develop in writing to similar levels of attainment. Significant

progress for children in Reading Recovery was also shown even when controlling for entry scores.

An oversight in this study was that it assumed children would have the opportunity for extended, independent writing in the classroom. Gardner, Sutherland and Meenan-Strain 91996) found mis-matches between class teachers' low expectations of children in Reading Recovery and the children's increased ability. Few experiences were provided for children to write independently and to apply their growing repertoire of skills and strategies.

A further design consideration applies to the collection of data. In this study, any sample of independent writing was included in the analysis, regardless of classroom origin and purpose. This could have been clarified initially to give uniformity to the process. Wade and Moore (1997), in their assessment of writing from ex-Reading Recovery children, clearly stipulated the purpose, audience and time set for the writing task in their data collection.

The study reported here gives further evidence of the success of Reading Recovery by demonstrating that the skills and knowledge acquired in Reading Recovery lessons are transferred to independent writing tasks in the classroom and that compared with children not receiving Reading Recovery, tutored children gain considerable control over the writing process. Actual time devoted specifically to writing in the Reading Recovery lesson, is quite short in comparison with reading (see Chapter Seven). The precise impact of this small component of the Reading Recovery lesson and its interrelatedness with reading development would profit from further research in order to measure the effect of the reading components of the lesson on children's writing development.

Research presented in Chapters Seven and Eight sheds some light on specific areas of writing which Reading Recovery teachers focus on. It may be that these are transferred to independent writing attempts in less well-supported environments. Increased literacy competence implies that children will have access to the broader curriculum on offer. The implications then for the impact of Reading Recovery on children's writing development have been shown to be more profound than previously reported.

CHAPTER SIX

CHILDREN'S UNDERSTANDINGS OF WRITING AND READING

6.1 Introduction

Studies which interview parents, teachers and administrators involved in Reading Recovery have been conducted by Holland (1991) and Jagger and Smith-Burke (1991). The latter study is entitled *Reading Recovery Voices.* However, the researchers do not to talk to the children receiving Reading Recovery tuition. The work by Moore and Wade (1993), undertaken in New Zealand and Australia, consults children in Reading Recovery, but also presents the views of Reading Recovery teachers, class teachers, administrators and parents.

In this study, interviews were conducted with children in the Reading Recovery programme to explore the child's experience of reading, writing and the Reading Recovery lesson *per se.* In addition, interviews with children with the same level of difficulties, yet not receiving one-to-one tutoring (i.e., comparison group) allow an estimate of the effect of Reading Recovery on children's understandings of literacy concepts.

Pilot study data are reported first in order to demonstrate how the preliminary research for this study contributed to the final interview design. Next, data from the main study are presented for the two groups, separately analysed for reading and writing. The final section presents interviews with Reading Recovery children only, exploring their

perceptions of the programme which have not been previously documented in the literature. Methodological discussion of the interview questions as well as the findings is interwoven with the analyses.

6.2 Interview Structure

The interview is divided into three main parts (full details are in Appendix III p. 357). The Reading and Writing components are subdivided into three parts; child's view of own reading/writing; child's view of reading/writing difficulties; the purpose of reading/writing. There are several questions in each subsection which can be thematically organised and this is reflected in the analysis. A summary of the structure of the interview is shown in Table 6.1 which groups the questions into a conceptual framework. This structuring of the interview applies only to the writing and reading components and not to the section for Reading Recovery children only. Both closed and open-ended questions were used in the final interview schedule.

Table 6.1 ***Summary Structure of the Interview*** (Appendix III)

Reading. **Section A**:

Questions 1-3 pertain to the individual's awareness of their reading ability.

Question 4 is concerned with attribution of reading success.

Questions 5-7 provide a profile of the child's home literacy environment.

Section B:

Questions 1-5 pertain to the child's concepts of print and text difficulty.

Questions 6 and 7 are concerned with strategies for reading.

Writing. **Section A**:

Questions follow a pattern similar to the reading section.

Questions 1-3 pertain to the child's awareness of her/his writing ability.

Questions 4-6 provide further information on the child's literacy environment.

Section B:

Questions 1-3 dissect the writing process and are concerned with the child's concepts of writing.

Questions 4 and 5 focus on children's strategies for writing.

Reading Recovery.

Question 1 ascertains children's awareness of being in the programme.

Questions 2 and 3 pertain to opinions of the components of a lesson.

Questions 4 and 5 compare reading and writing in the classroom with Reading Recovery lessons.

PILOT STUDY

6.3 Procedure

The basic structure of the interview was drawn from Southgate's work (1981) for older children and from Francis (1982), both of which focus on reading only. The interview for this study was extended to include items on writing and a section on the Reading Recovery lesson. There are 32 items in total (including reading, writing and Reading Recovery *per se.*) The interview in Appendix III is the final version used for the main study and not the one used in the pilot study reported next.

Five interviews were administered, transcribed and analysed during the Summer school term of 1992 when children were nearing the end of their Reading Recovery programme. The interview was then scrutinised and adapted by a research professor and a Reading Recovery teacher. The purpose of the pilot study was to refine the interview items and to determine whether permission would be granted to talk to the children in the Reading Recovery programme.

Negotiating access to the programme proved to be a highly political and sensitive procedure. Some Local Education Authorities were less accommodating than others. Many telephone calls were required and Appendix I (p.349) documents some of the written communication.

6.4 Findings

Reading Recovery is designed to achieve rapid increase in literacy learning through intensive training, but it makes no further claims beyond

achievement in reading and writing in terms of raised scores on the diagnostic survey tests which indicate attainment of independent processing of text. Interview data in this study assesses children's perceptions of themselves as literacy learners and specifies what they know about print.

6.4.1 Reading

Of the five children interviewed, all five reported that they enjoyed reading and thought that they were good readers. Three reported that this was because their teacher tells them as much. In both scenarios given in which they were able to read very well, (Question 3a and 3b in Appendix III) no child said this was because they were good at it. Four and three respectively reported that being able to read successfully would be due to luck.

Four of the five reported that they read a lot at home but more at school, and the same four reported that adults at home did not read.

Children described easy books as those that were *little* or *short* and which contained high frequency words. Hard books were identified as having lots of words on one page, *too long* and containing words which did not make sense when sounded out.

Of the strategies employed when unable to read a word, the predominant pattern was to *ask* at home and *sound out* at school, indicating that children may vary their strategies depending not so much on the text, but their perception of what is required of them and anticipated help they might receive.

All five children thought it was important to learn to read and the predominant reason was as a preparation for junior school and for later use in adult life. None reported reading as a pleasurable or purposeful activity of use to them now.

6.4.2 Writing

The results for writing yielded a similar pattern except that the children reported less certainty as to their ability. Four of the five said they enjoyed writing, while three said they were good writers, compared with all five for reading.

Four reported writing at home and all five said they wrote more at school because they *had to*. Again the predominant strategy if having difficulty spelling a word was to *ask* at home (5/5) and *sound out* at school (4/5).

All children thought it important to learn to write and again the main reason was as a preparation for junior school.

6.4.3 Reading Recovery Lessons

With respect to the lessons, four of the five did not know why they were having these special lessons. Their preferred activity was reading the new book and the least favourite activities were writing and reading at the beginning of the lesson.

All children preferred writing in Reading Recovery lessons to writing in the classroom, and three of the five reported preferring reading in the classroom to reading in Reading Recovery lessons. This is explored in more detail in the main study.

6.5 Conclusion

Interviewing children in the Reading Recovery programme provides a means for exploring their understandings of the tasks of learning to write and to read. Their views on writing and reading will be compared with non-tutored children in the main study, looking more closely at their understandings of literacy.

This pilot study served chiefly to assist the development of the research design and interview tool. The schools and children who participated in the pilot study did not participate in the main study. The main outcome of the pilot was that the interview was refined and adapted based on how children responded. The chief adjustment was to focus the more open-ended questions which children found difficult to answer and which lengthened the interviewing time considerably. Furthermore, content analysis indicated that children were less confident of themselves as writers than as readers and it was decided to monitor this closely in the main study.

Main Study:
Interviews with Reading Recovery and Comparison Children

6.6 Procedure

6.6.1 Participants

During the main fieldwork (1992-1993), seventy interviews were conducted; 34 with Reading Recovery children and 36 with children in the comparison group. Table 6.2 shows the composition of the two groups. It was originally intended to research the views of Reading Recovery children only in order to learn about and describe their literacy understandings. The adoption of a comparison group provides an avenue for putting their understandings into perspective with a similar group of children but which is not receiving intensive literacy support. In addition, the use of a comparison group provides consistency with the previous study reported in Chapter Five and adopts the same sample.

Table 6.2 Composition of Reading Recovery and Comparison Groups

GROUPS	boys	girls	minorities
Reading Recovery	19	15	9
Comparison	21	15	10

The cultural composition of the Reading Recovery group included eight Asian children and one Chinese child. The comparison group included four Asian children and four Afro-Caribbean children as well as representatives from other European countries.

Children were interviewed on a one-to-one basis towards the end of their time in Reading Recovery or in the latter part of the academic year for children in the comparison group. This meant that for children in Reading Recovery not all the children in one school were interviewed in the same week, whereas children in comparison schools were interviewed in the same visit or on one of two visits.

6.6.2 Context for Interview Administration

Due to the wide range of facilities provided for Reading Recovery children and the range of Local Education Authorities used in this study, interviews were carried out in diverse locations within the child's own school. Locations for interviewing included a head's office, a music room, a corridor, a teachers' resource room, a staff room, a sick room/lavatory area, a library, an open library/corridor area, a stair landing, a Reading Recovery room, a dining hut, a P.E. cupboard, a cloakroom and a small caravan!

While there were parts of the interview that could have been extended, the interview was 'kept moving' and required on average 30 minutes per child, ample length for children of six years of age.

6.6.3 Data Collection and Analysis Strategy

Children were either sent to a pre-established location or collected from their classrooms by the interviewer, bringing with them their writing books and self-selected texts. The interviewer also had some books available. Experience as a teacher enabled the interviewer to strike an immediate rapport with the children. The interview proceeded as soon as possible with the interviewer sitting opposite or next to the child. Copious notes

were taken detailing children's answers and the books referred to. Interviews (n=70) were also audio-taped and fully transcribed.

The interview data formed part of a large data bank together with writing sample and observation data collected for each child in this research. Procedure for analysis conformed to qualitative approaches for analysing data, well documented in the literature. Patton (1980), Lincoln and Guba (1985), Tesch (1990), Riley (1990) and Bogdan and Biklen (1992) were specifically referred to for confirmation of interview data analysis procedures.

Interview data were initially analysed in terms of conceptually similar questions (see Table 6.1). Codes were allocated by separating specific responses. These formed categories based on children's verbatim answers. Children's responses were then tallied to these categories. Where children's differing comments were semantically the same, these were re-compiled into one category. All of the tabulated results that follow arise from the sample presented in Table 6.2. The totals add up to more than the number of participants as children often gave extended answers encompassing more than one category. In some cases children were unable to give an appropriate answer.

6.7 Results for Reading Recovery and Comparison Children: Reading

The data are presented by conceptual content of the interview rather than by question number.

6.7.1 Reading Awareness and Ability

Equal numbers of children in Reading Recovery who stated that they liked reading also saw themselves as good readers. These were not always the same children. The majority of comparison group children (24) stated that they liked reading, although fewer (22) saw themselves as good readers. Those that did not like reading said this was because it was "too hard", and one because it was "boring".

Reasons given by Reading Recovery children for liking reading were predominantly enjoyment (10) and fun (8), while some children could not verbalise their reasons. Three children referred to the pictures, six to knowing or learning from reading, two related liking reading in terms of Reading Recovery success in moving up the levels, and two referred to the content of the books. The two children who neither liked reading nor saw themselves as good readers responded to both questions that this was because they could not read. For the comparison group, the predominant reasons given for liking reading were fun and enjoyment. Five children referred to the pictures, six to learning from reading, three mentioned the story content and one said it was easy.

More Reading Recovery children than comparison group children perceived themselves to be good readers. Children's perceptions of themselves as good readers (32 children in Reading Recovery; 22 in the comparison group) comprised three broad categories from both groups. These are explained below.

Reading Recovery:

a) *extrinsic*: twelve children attributed their perception of themselves as a good reader to the fact that they were told (positive

reinforcement by the Reading Recovery teacher, a parent or a friend).

b) *intrinsic*: eighteen children attributed their perception to their ability in terms of being "good at it", "know the words", "read nicely", "read hard books" and "read a lot".

c) *progress*: two children saw themselves as good readers by their position in Reading Recovery levels. This is neatly illustrated below by one child:

> "Yes, well I've gone past the red books and the pink books and I'm on black and I've gone very far."

Comparison Group:

a) *extrinsic*: five children attributed this to the fact that they were told (positive reinforcement by teacher (3), parent (1), friend (1)).

b) *intrinsic*: ten children attributed their perceptions to their ability in terms of "can read easy books"; "know words" and "can read without help".

c) *progress*: only one child identified their ability with reference to their position in the class colour coded reading scheme.

The remaining six children in this group who perceived themselves to be good readers said "no reason" and did not or could not reflect upon their ability. All Reading Recovery children were able to offer an explanation. Table 6.3 summarises this information.

Table 6.3 ***Categories for Children's Self-perceptions as Good Readers***

ATTRIBUTION	READING RECOVERY	COMPARISON
Extrinsic	12	5
Intrinsic	18	10
Progress	2	1
No category		6
TOTAL	32	22

The children's views on what readers have to know or do to be a good reader were classified. Responses were sometimes given across categories where some children replied with a range of issues. Seven categories were identified for the Reading Recovery group and five for the comparison group.

Reading Recovery children perceive reading to be about:

1. *Phonology*: "need *ABC*"; "spell the words out"; "know letters, look at words, look at first two letters..."; " letters - sound out"; "spelling"; "know how to spell, know letters"; "alphabet".
2. *Making sense*: "keep on reading, know how to make some words and try to read...check if you know *abcd* and it makes sense"; "how to get the story".

3. *Strategies*: "go back and sound a few words out"; "it's like a puzzle"; "sound out letters and look at pictures and look very hard and if you get stuck go back and read it all over again"; "got to guess the words..."; "can always go back"; "read fast, turn pages fast, read sentence quickly"; "look at pictures"; "try and point with eyes"; "good eyes to look at writing"; "got to guess the words and check if you know".
4. *Punctuation*: "full stops, sentences..."
5. *Writing*: "...know how to write"; "need to know about writing"; "write own stories, read out, know what is writing".
6. *Memory*: "in your mind...learn what it says": "remember...".
7. *Learning*: "concentrate..."; "ask to be taught to read"; "listen"; "be teached to read"; "practice".

Comparison group children perceive reading to be about:

1. *Phonology*: "need to know what the letters are"; "know all letters"; "practice letters"; "know ABC"; "alphabet, so know letters and words"; "have to know sounds"; "know how to spell long words"; "know sounds to help you"
2. *Strategies*: "try to spell word"; "look at words, say letters"; "try to figure out what words say"; "keep reading and keep looking at words"
3. *Experience/Knowledge:* "read lots of stories"; "have to know what it says"; "read a lot"; "need to know plenty of words"
4. *Writing*: "be able to write my letters, my numbers, my sentences"; "write, because when you write you know all the letters"; "learn to write words, it's the same thing"
5. *Behaviour*: "be quiet"; "speak nicely and clearly"

6.7.2 Attribution Concerning Success at Reading

During the administration of this section it became clear that there could have been many more reasons given by the children. However, as this question was modified due to the difficulty in response from children in the pilot study, a closed question format was used. A fourth category to the three given, could have been the ease or difficulty of the book itself. A fourth 'other' category was therefore created during administration of the interview if children mentioned the book. In order to draw out whether children differentiated in their attribution between reading at home or in the classroom and reading in Reading Recovery, two scenarios about reading were presented to children in the Reading Recovery group and results are shown in Table 6.4.

Table 6.4 Reading Recovery children's attributions for reading success

	Scenario 1 (RR book)	Scenario 2 (any book)
a) good at it	5	13
b) helped by someone	15	12
c) lucky	10	6
d) other	1	
TOTAL	31	31

The predominant finding was that Reading Recovery children attributed their success in reading the Reading Recovery book to being helped (15) while only five recognised their own ability. A converse pattern emerges when reading an own choice book, with thirteen children recognising their own ability. However, being helped is still a dominant attribution (12). Luck also played the greater part for the Reading Recovery book scenario and less so for the children's own choice book.

Comparison children were given just one scenario and results are shown in Table 6.5.

Table 6.5 ***Comparison: children's attributions for reading success***

Children attribute their success at reading to being:	
a) good	12
b) helped	13
c) lucky	5
d) other	4
TOTAL	34

Almost equal numbers of children attributed their 'success' to their own ability and to being helped. Luck and text difficulty (other) were less common attributions. This emphasis in attribution category corresponds

directly to the previous open-ended questions on why children think they are good readers in which two categories emerged from the data, namely extrinsic and intrinsic (self-ability).

6.7.3 Literacy Environment Profile

The purpose for investigating children's preferences for reading aloud or 'in their heads' was initially to diagnose whether children preferred support or independence. However, the nature of this question resulted in confusion between 'aloud' and 'loudly' on the children's part; one child preferring to read loudly so as to annoy his parents! Of the nine Reading Recovery children who said they did prefer reading aloud, six said this was in order to get help and get better. This question did not contribute satisfactorily to a workable profile of children. Two children could not differentiate between the two situations.

In the comparison group twelve children preferred to read quietly to themselves and seventeen preferred to read aloud, while three did not express a preference. Of those who preferred reading aloud, five said this was in order to get help. Two examples of the idiosyncratic reasons given for reading to themselves as a preference are given here.

> Quietly by 'self, 'cos all the time I read to another person it's like talking to myself 'cos they don't help me out when I'm stuck on a letter. They just say 'What is that letter?' and they're asking me what I don't know or I'll have done it.
>
> (Child 55)

> Quietly on my own because I don't really read I just look at the pictures, just pretend you're reading in your brain by looking at the words.
>
> (Child 40)

Asking children about their reading habits showed that the majority of children clearly read at home as well as at school. However, for both groups most children read more at school (Reading Recovery - 23; comparison - 21) compared with those who reported reading more at home (Reading Recovery - 11; comparison - 11).

Reasons for reading more at school comprised similar categories for both groups. The main ones are presented in Table 6.6.

Table 6.6 Main reasons for reading more at school

	Reading Recovery	Comparison
more books available	5	5
access to extra help	7	5
'have to'	4	3
'like to'		2

Of those who read more at home in the Reading Recovery group, an equal number said there were more books at home (6), one was frightened of being laughed at in school, one said there was no opportunity to read at school, two *had to* and two *liked to* read. Thus, reading is an activity engaged in by children from the Reading Recovery group both at home and at school for similar reasons.

In the comparison group, seven children indicated there were more books at home or that they took books home, three referred to their parents'

influence and one was driven by a specific goal as illustrated in the following quote:

> Yes at home, 'cos all the time when I go home, I read again and again until I've finished all of them. I need to get up to gold and I'm on orange. (Child 55)

Thus children with literacy learning difficulties, actively engage in reading at home and at school. They do not necessarily come from book-barren homes but prefer to read more where there is access to support, predominantly at school.

In order to discover more about children's literacy environments, the interview question pertaining to other people reading at home was constructed. However, subsequent analysis of the interview questions revealed an issue which should have been investigated but was not. This only became apparent during the administration of the interview. Children were asked whether 'people at home were seen reading', in order to determine whether or not they had experience of role models for reading. However, an important aspect of significant others reading in the home is whether or not and how much children are read *to*. This is vital to building up a literacy environment profile as it is considered that reading to children is one of the most important factors in children learning to read.

Despite this omission in the interview schedule, it was clear that the majority of children (Reading Recovery - 18; comparison - 20) saw others (parents, siblings, grandparents) engaged in a variety of reading contexts, including letters, books, newspapers, magazines, own language books, library books, homework and use of a public library. The data indicated that children in need of literacy support do not necessarily come from homes where reading is not a daily, purposeful activity. This, combined with the other evidence of children's literacy environments, is at odds with previous research about the background of children with reading

difficulties. While there may not be a strong book culture in the home, reading activities and reading materials are a part of every day life for children in both groups as illustrated by this Reading Recovery child's response:

> Dad reads a lot. Lots of books about medals and furniture. Reads a lot of newspapers. He likes reading newspapers and magazines. Every day he sees what's on.
>
> (Child 14)

6.7.4 Children's Concepts About Print and Reading

Children were asked to choose a book to provide a context for discussing their views on reading difficulties. Reasons given for selection were primarily familiarity, pleasure, and ease of text. Children's criteria were grouped into categories and are presented overleaf.

Texts regarded as 'easy' were those which:	Reading Recovery	Comparison
• had big words (i.e. print size)	7	10
• had easy words	9	7
• had few words	9	8
• had pictures	7	8
• were known or read before	14	7
• were liked/enjoyed		3

Texts regarded as 'hard' were those which:	Reading Recovery	Comparison
• had a lot of text	20	16
• had difficult words	6	8
• had small print size	7	9
• children said they could not read		7

Children often had more than one criterion. This is exemplified in the following interview extracts from Reading Recovery children:

> Got too much pages and too much writing on each one. If it's like this, it's hard.
>
> (Child 31)

> This sort of writing is easy because when you read it looks a bit big. The writing's and not really long words.
>
> (Child 33)

> This writing is so long. There's lots of really small and it's really long writing...really long story as well.
>
> (Child 26)

Using books in the interview to help children articulate their understandings, provided an opportunity to see what children actually knew about print and the complexity of their own analyses. This is clearly illustrated in the following examples pertaining to text difficulty and word difficulty from children in the comparison group. These examples also highlight the range of implicit understanding found in children with literacy learning difficulties.

'Where's Spot' 'cos the writing's not tiny, it's big, and it's also quite fun, 'cos you can read the words inside the popping out bits. Looks very easy.

(Child 54)

It's got all this writing; it's long, long, long and I might not know what the sentences are or letters.

(Child 60)

Difficult 'cos it's got loads of small writing and small pictures and it's got no pictures on some of 'em [*pages*].

(Child 56)

Having explored children's perceptions of text difficulty, this was refined further to discover children's perceptions of word difficulty. The children's responses to questions about word complexity were classified and are presented below.

Words regarded as 'hard' were those which:	Reading Recovery	Comparison
• could not be sounded out	8	7
• are long words (number of letters)	14	15
• were unknown	4	4
• could not be guessed	2	1
• looked hard		4

Two children in the comparison group had no concept of word as demonstrated by their pointing to pictures or groups of words and exemplified in the following extract.

Child 50 looked at pictures behind flaps in a flap book saying "hard word, hard word". Then pointed to a picture and said, "this is hard 'cos it's got too much writing". When asked to point out a specific 'hard' word, Child 50 pointed to (TEXT) 'What have you', and said "that one".

Words regarded as 'easy' were those which:	Reading Recovery	Comparison
• were short/ had easy letters	15	14
• could sound out	5	3
• were known words	10	9
• were high frequency	2	2
• could be guessed from picture	1	2
• had been taught	6	

Five children in the comparison group stated they could not read anything (and therefore no words were considered 'easy').

Children often used several criteria and were adept at analysing word complexity, as exemplified in the following extracts from the Reading Recovery children.

'Scary'. I get stuck on it. I think it's slippy or snake and it's supposed to be another word and I don't know it very well. It's a bit long. I know the letters, but I can't work out what it is. s,c, can't slide in together and I need Mrs. E. to help me.

(Child 11)

Child: 'Make'. It's a little word and you can sound it out properly and it hasn't got any silent things in it.

Inter.: I thought that E on the end was a silent one isn't it?

Child: But sometimes I can hear the E, well I know it's there.

(Child 22)

'Ship's' a hard word. There's no silent letters in it but some children think it's a long word like ship is a big thing, and it sounds long but it's not really long.

(Child 21)

'Clown's' quite a hard word 'cos sometimes you think it's 'come', 'cos it begins with a c and it's got a O as well but the L's in front of it. It doesn't make sense. [*re-reads sentence inserting* ***come*** *for* ***clown*** *to illustrate that the word could not be* ***come***

(Child 18)

These examples indicate the depth of knowledge <u>about</u> print which enables Reading Recovery children to dissect a word at a complex level in order to define a word as 'hard', even if they can read it. This means that these children do not just consider easy words to be those which they know or can read. They are language 'diagnosers' with a metalanguage for talking about words. This also demonstrates that these children in Reading Recovery not only have knowledge about the alphabetic system but can also apply this knowledge in an analytic way. Data regarding 'easy' to read words supports this. Six Reading Recovery children specifically mentioned being taught words and these were regarded as 'easy' because they were known words. Thus direct teaching was acknowledged. This was the only aspect not mentioned by children in the Comparison group in an otherwise similar pattern.

In general, the children's responses indicated that many children in the comparison group appeared to have greater difficulty expressing understandings of word complexity. They did not appear to examine words with the confidence and clarity expressed by many of the Reading Recovery children.

6.7.5 Strategies for Reading

Reading Recovery practice teaches specific strategies for reading, through

questioning and reinforcement. The aim is to develop the child's own self-monitoring system. These strategies are based on what Clay observed good readers to be doing. This section of the interview commences in an open-ended way to ascertain children's own understandings of strategies and whether these in fact vary depending on the support system available, whether children apply the strategies learned in Reading Recovery to other situations, and whether they can verbalise what they do when they read. Interview questioning was then narrowed to seven prescribed strategies for children to indicate whether they would use them or not. The reason for including these closed questions is that children may not be able to articulate certain strategies in an open-ended situation, but may recognise and use them.

Strategies identified by the children when they come to a word they do not know are set out below. The results from the two groups are quite dissimilar and are therefore presented separately.

Reading Recovery Group:

At home:		At school:	
• ask	17	• ask	14
• sound out	7	• sound out	9
• keep going	2	• keep going	4
• try/guess	6	• try/guess	7
• parent tells	3	• go back	1
• picture cues	1		

Comparison Group:

At home:	At school:
• ask 16 • sound out 6 • try it 2 • put away 3	• ask 21 • sound out 5 • try/guess 2 • teacher tells 1 • nothing 2

Four children in this group simply said they could not read.

While there are a range of strategies mentioned, the predominant method is still to ask, as illustrated in the following example from a child in the comparison group:

> Well I'd try to sound it out and check it wasn't a word you couldn't sound out or make up. I'd go and ask somebody that knows it.
>
> (Child 54)

Some children did not differentiate between home and school situations, as Reading Recovery Child 12 exemplifies,

> I do the same what I do at school; I can guess, spell it out or remember.

The children were then given specific strategies and asked to identify whether they would use a strategy or not. The results (a to g correspond to interview stem questions) are shown in Table 6.7.

Table 6.7 Strategies for reading

Strategy	Reading Recovery		Comparison	
	YES*	NO*	YES*	NO*
a) miss out	25	8	16	14
b) turn the page	10	23	17	13
c) sound out	31		28	2
d) re-read	30	2	24	7
e) change book	12	20	13	19
f) ask	27	4	34	
g) use pictures	31		34	

* Numbers may not add up to the total sample as children may have been unable to answer specifically.

It can be seen that the majority of Reading Recovery children would not give up by turning the page or changing the book. The high number of children reporting that they would miss out a word is testimony to their

use of this as a strategy. It became apparent during the process of administering the interview that this question needed clarifying. Probing children's answers revealed that some children would miss out a word with the intention of returning to it once meaning had been grasped, rather than miss out a word without intending to work it out, which the question may have implied. Only one comparison child clarified the intention to return, as illustrated here.

> I sometimes do and when I get the other bit you can come back to it and it gives you a clue.
>
> (Child 35)

This child, although in the comparison group, was part of a group of children who received extra tuition from the head teacher in this very small school.

Similarly, most children at some time would use the strategy of re-reading. Using phonology and picture cues were dominant strategies and again the majority of children saw 'asking' as a viable option, although this was often qualified as illustrated by Reading Recovery child 12:

> Yes I would only if I couldn't get the word.

6.7.6 Purposes for Reading

There was unanimous agreement by all participants that children should learn to read rather than waiting until adulthood. Reading Recovery children's reasons ranged from

> Yes, if you can't read and if someone gives you a letter you can't read it, say if it was a party letter and you couldn't read it out, you couldn't go to the party
>
> (Child 35)

to

...and your children need to learn and if you couldn't read, it would be really silly 'cos your children wouldn't know the words either.

(Child 15)

Comparison children's reasons ranged from,

Yes, so they can get a good work badge.

(Child 37)

to

Yes, well because if you want to do some reading when you're older and you didn't know and you couldn't go to any school you'd have a hard life!

(Child 44)

Answers for reasons for learning to read were collated into categories as follows:

- preparation for juniors/harder texts
- preparation for job/life
- to avoid stupidity
- to be able to read
- read important letters
- to be able to do current school work, i.e. read for a purpose

Children in the comparison group also referred to receiving extrinsic rewards. Three children in this group were unable to specify a reason.

Most children implied an element of "no choice" in learning to read, as one Reading Recovery child observed:

You can stop reading when you're a adult!

(Child 2)

6.8 Results for Reading Recovery and Comparison Children: Writing

6.8.1 Writing Awareness and Ability

All but one of the children in Reading Recovery stated that they liked writing and only three children did not see themselves as good writers. These three simply said they were not 'good at it' or 'get stuck'. Reasons for liking to write were pleasure (13), for learning (5), a preference to sums (1), ability related (1), its status as being 'good for you' (2), opportunity to express self (2), and no particular reason (5). Reasons for seeing themselves as good writers however, were far more likely to be due to a parent, friend, teacher or Reading Recovery teacher telling them, accounting for 11 explanations. Specifically, children identified praise for handwriting:

> 'cos the teacher says I write neatly and I always get my words correct.
>
> (Child 27)

and for neatness and word spacing:

> Mrs. A says I'm the bestest writer and I do nice spaces.
>
> (Child 30)

These represent the transcriptional components of writing, of which handwriting is not a specific focus in the Reading Recovery handbook, but which appears frequently in lessons.

Children also attributed their independence as writers as a reason for seeing themselves as good writers; 17 children identified 'writing by myself'

or their ability to 'learn words' as a category. Speed and knowledge of words accounted for five other explanations and trying hard, for one.

Of the comparison group children interviewed, 29 children reported that they liked writing. The five that said they did not like it, stated this was because they could not spell or preferred to read. Ten children did not see themselves as good writers. Reasons for this were predominantly connected to 'knowledge' or 'spelling' rather than strategies, and two children had received negative feedback. Reasons for seeing themselves as good writers were their handwriting ability (2); adult reinforcement (4); ability to copy (4); ability in spelling (5); self-knowledge, i.e, I can write by myself (3). Four children were unable to specify a reason.

Thus the broad categories of attribution identified by both groups are as follows:

a) extrinsic reinforcement

b) intrinsic attribution (recognition of own ability)

The data show that Reading Recovery children perceive writing to be about the following classifications:

1. *Phonology:* "letters 'cos if you don't know them you can't write"; "do the letters, sound it out, write the first letter"; "know letters"; "letters, alphabet, know what letter is in the word"; "spell things out"; "know letters in ABC..."

2. *Making Sense*: "have confidence, make sense"; "must know what you're gonna write first..."; "write words to make sense..."; "know words, make sense"

3. *Transcriptional Features*: "neatly"; "don't do scribble"; "write letters right"

4. *Reading/Memory*: "learn how to read, how to spell words"; "reading"; "should know easy words"

5. *Strategies*: "make mistakes, rub out and change things"; "keep on writing"; "...know the first letter and try the others"; "look at books for words"; "write every day, change it to make sense"

These categories are almost identical to those constructed from the data for reading awareness and ability.

Analysis of the comparison group data suggested very similar categories. However there was no evidence for a category of *making sense*. Some children referred specifically to *punctuation*. The categories are:

1. *Phonology*: "write properly, know alphabet and letters"; "how to write ABC letters"; "how to do ABC"; "know alphabet"

2. *Transcriptional features*: "write neatly"; "and if you want to be brilliant have to be really set up for it and know how to write neatly"; "have to be taught to do proper writing"; "need to know shapes to be the right way"; "take care of spaces and full stops"

3. *Reading/Memory*: "Know what words look like"; "learn to read and how to write the words"; "copy and learn words"; "know how to do the words"; "know how to write, learn more"; "need to know plenty of words, and a couple of hard words"

4. *Strategies*: "know what the story's gonna start off like"; "think about something to write"' "first you have to write a word and if you don't know it, make it up"

6.8.2 Literacy Environment Profile for Writing

This was equally important to investigate, as writing is often viewed as a secondary skill or one that comes after reading. It is also less likely than reading to be encountered in the home environment.

More than half the children in Reading Recovery stated that they did not write much at home, the majority stating that they write more often at school. Fifteen children observed this was because they 'had to', as illustrated by Child 22:

> Not that much, more at school 'cos you've got to at school There's loads of, well that's the reason why they've got schools open, to learn you how to read and write and things.

Others said they preferred to play at home, or there was no paper available.

More than half the comparison group children (17) reported that they did not write much at home. The majority of children said that they wrote more at school with 'having to' (15), wanting to (3), lack of resources at home (2), preferring to play at home (2) and receiving help (3) being the main reasons. Of the five that said they wrote more at home, two did not like school, one mentioned homework, one had 'easy' books, and one mentioned the computer.

For children in Reading Recovery, preferences for writing subjects were mainly writing stories (18) and writing about themselves (9). This is of some interest because evidence from the observations indicates that many of the 'sentences' produced in Reading Recovery lessons are, conversely, based on books read or about self rather than children's own imaginative stories.

Comparison group children described an assortment of contexts for preferences of writing including letters, lists, poems, handwriting, known words, stories and personal writing.

Reading Recovery children reported that role models for writing outside school were less numerous than for reading. Approximately half the children indicated that people at home did write, including siblings, parents and grandparents. Writing events included letters, lists, stories, cards and 'office' work. Hence, there was access to models for writing at home for at least half of the Reading Recovery children interviewed.

A similar situation was reported by the children in the comparison group. Half the children reported not having a model of 'writer' at home. Of those that did (siblings, parents, grandparents), the contexts included important letters, lists, homework, letters, own language stories, cards and office/ computer work.

6.8.3 Children's Concepts about Print and Writing

In order to study children's understandings in this area, the children brought writing books and samples along to the interview so that the interviewer could use them to study the children's perceptions using real text and provide a context for discussion.

Understandings of the complexity of writing varied between the two groups with the comparison children's responses yielding more categories than those for Reading Recovery. Responses were classified as follows:

Writing designated as 'hard' was that which:		
	Reading Recovery	Comparison
all words were not known	14	
contained hard/long words	9	7
required a lot of writing	4	4
required neat handwriting	2	1
required correcting	1	4
needed more time	3	
copied from board		4
could not be read back		3
content was specified		2
received no help		1

Several children in the comparison group were unable to read their writing samples and one child had almost exactly the same content written on every page of a book over a three-term period!

Writing designated as 'easy' was that which:		
	Reading Recovery	Comparison
letters/words were known	16	5
contained easy words	10	
was copied	1	10
was short	6	3
was written independently	4	2
did not require rewriting		2
received a tick		1
was dictated		1
was written quickly		1
could be read back		1

To investigate children's awareness of the different components of writing, children were asked which aspects they found hard or easy. The data are summarised in Table 6.8.

Table 6.8 Children's assessment of the writing process

Writing Feature	Hard		Neither		Easy	
	Reading Recovery	Comparison	Reading Recovery	Comparison	Reading Recovery	Comparison
a) handwriting	6	12	2		23	21
b) spelling	16	19	4	2	11	12
c) ideas	9	15	3		19	18

The central response (neither) was not offered to children but they verbalised their own compromise if they did not like the forced choices. Spelling is the component more children find difficult. Twice as many children in the comparison group as in the Reading Recovery group identified both handwriting and ideas as difficult. The majority of children in both groups said they found handwriting and ideas easy.

6.8.4 Strategies for Writing

Sound to phoneme representation and the practice of taking 'to fluency' high frequency and complex words are predominant teaching strategies in Reading Recovery lessons. Simple dichotomised answers for strategies used in the home when not sure of how to spell a word whilst engaged in a piece of writing were clearly stated by the children. Of the Reading Recovery children, twenty reported that they would ask and nine said they would try. One stated that they would find the word using a dictionary and

another would only use words they knew. A slightly broader pattern emerged for coping with the situation in a school context, but of similar proportions to the previous scenario.

The strategies used in school by the children in Reading Recovery were:

- ask 21
- sound out 5
- try 3
- look it up 2

There was therefore little difference in strategies used at home and at school. The predominant method, as for reading, despite Reading Recovery's problem solving emphasis, is to ask.

Results for the comparison group were almost identical to the Reading Recovery children. Strategies used in the home when not sure how to spell a word were to ask (26) or to try (7). The strategies used at school by the children in the comparison group were:

- ask 15
- sound out 6
- try 3
- look it up 5
- nothing 4

There was no apparent difference between the two groups in the strategies used at home and at school.

When asked explicitly about use of specific strategies, the majority responded that they would use all of them at some time as shown in Table 6.9. This was the same in both groups.

Table 6.9 Children's strategies for writing

STRATEGY	YES		NO	
	Reading Recovery	Comparison	Reading Recovery	Comparison
a) try/sound out	33	26	1	4
b) look up in book	26	23	8	8
c) use environment	21	17	9	13
d) ask	25	27	9	3

There may of course be other strategies but children were given the opportunity to voice their own (if they knew how to express it) and no others arose. This is not to say however, that children do not use other strategies when writing words they find hard to spell. The fact that all but one Reading Recovery child professed the confidence to try, may suggest that Reading Recovery lessons play a role in supporting children's spelling development with simultaneous teaching of standard print knowledge. For the comparison children, almost equal numbers said they would ask and try.

6.8.5 Purposes for Writing

As for reading, all children affirmed that children should learn to write. Preparation for the future was the main explanation for this necessity. Children in Reading Recovery gave reasons for learning to write as a child as follows:

- to be able to write when older 13
- to get a job 3
- to write better 9
- to read better 3
- to be able to write/have to 7

Hence a notion of present improvement, a functional purpose, and a direct relation to reading development are all recognised in the children's explanations as exemplified by Child 23:

> Yes, 'cos then they can remember everything and you can write little booklets and write loads of things. You can't just do anything in writing you have to get the sentence right and make it make sense 'cos sometimes you have to do it again if it don't make sense.
>
> (Child 23)

Children in the comparison group also affirmed that it was necessary to learn to write as a child and gave very similar answers. Reasons for this were:

- to write when older 12
- to get a job 3
- to learn 10
- choice of activity after writing 2

- extrinsic reward 1
- no reason 2
- adults stress it 1

Their responses indicated a strong reference to the future in terms of opportunity and necessity. However, there was no notion of writing for immediate purposes, for intrinsic value or in relation to reading.

6.9 Discussion: Similarities and Differences between Reading Recovery and Comparison Groups

6.9.1 Introduction

The purpose of this discussion is to highlight salient differences and similarities from the interview data. As with the data analysis, discussion points are conceptually framed rather than following each interview question. Frith's (1985) model of skill acquisition encompasses the interconnected nature of reading and writing development. In this section, the findings for reading and writing are discussed together for both groups.

It is important to remember that information children do not mention is often as important as that which they do mention. This often reflects a learned emphasis from the environments in which they are engaged in literacy learning (Arnold, 1982; Francis, 1979).

6.9.2 Extrinsic and Intrinsic Attributions

How children view themselves as learners may influence their attributions for success in literacy. Reading Recovery children are selected as being

those who score lowest on a diagnostic survey and research has shown that low ability is often correlated with low self esteem (Williams, 1973). One of the chief purposes of Reading Recovery tuition is to improve the child's ability to monitor their own reading and writing which progresses as children develop increased confidence in their own abilities (Clay, 1993). Achievement of this corresponds with discontinuation from the programme. To what do these children attribute the perception of their ability and success in the programme?

Children in the comparison group were generally less confident about their ability as readers with a third responding that they were not good readers as opposed to only a tenth of Reading Recovery children: "Reading Recovery seems to have an impact on achievement motivation in that it appears to facilitate a sense of increased ability and control over one's reading and learning" (Cohen, Mcdonnell & Osborn, 1989, p. 118). Other studies, such as McKinley's (1990) study of 7-10 year olds, indicate children do have positive attitude scores to reading even if they are not receiving extra teaching. So we might not expect non-tutored children to have markedly less positive orientations to reading.

Not one comparison child stated that they liked writing while thirteen Reading Recovery children did. Hence, the process of learning to write within Reading Recovery lessons appears to foster positive attitudes. It could be that Reading Recovery children express liking it because they have gained greater control and knowledge of the process as a result of the direct teaching in the Reading Recovery lesson. This is reflected in the reasons given by children for why they perceive themselves to be good writers.

Of the children who did perceive themselves to be good writers, twelve Reading Recovery children (three in the comparison group) attributed this to the fact that they could write by themselves.

In this study, similar numbers in both groups attributed reading success to self ability. Both groups reported 'being helped' as the strongest reason for success. This then is not entirely consistent with previous research in which Reading Recovery children were found to attribute school success more frequently to their own ability and effort than other children in remedial programmes (Cohen, McDonnell & Osborn, 1987). However, lack of difference in self-ability attribution may be due to the content of the interview question. In this study the question dealt with why children perceive themselves to be good readers rather than success at school generally.

This finding is somewhat clarified in the answers given by the few children who said that they did not like reading. Children in Reading Recovery blamed themselves i.e., self-ability. This is consistent with attributions from those who indicated they were good readers. Conversely, the comparison children blamed the task and thereby relocated their responsibility to learn to read to the task itself rather than their ability. The reasons expressed by both groups for liking reading are consistent with the top three most common in Southgate's (1981) interview with older children.

With the Reading Recovery scenario (reading the running record book really well) Reading Recovery children's attributions change. Context therefore seems to be a vital factor when conducting literacy research with young children. The most often attributed source of success was being helped. This is a reversal of the previous scenario and may indicate that children's responses are context determined. Reading Recovery children may view dependency as more laudable than recognising their own ability. This is pertinent because these findings are probably contrary to Reading Recovery's philosophy and expectations.

However, these children are receiving constant daily support from, and build a relationship with, a significant adult and may paradoxically locate their success in this adult whilst developing self-monitoring and independent abilities.

Moyle (1982) outlined a model of diagnostic teaching in a pyramid concept. She demonstrated how giving children a feeling of success in realistic enjoyable tasks, as opposed to direct remediation of specific difficulties, should be the apex or starting point for such teaching. The next layer of focus is attending to areas of difficulty followed by a gradual reduction of detailed support. Reading Recovery lessons seem to mirror this pattern, particularly in the period of 'Roaming around the Known' and the first episode of the daily lessons which aims at raising children's confidence and acknowledging what they *can* do.

6.9.3 Reading and Writing Awareness

Children were required to articulate the knowledge or behaviours needed to be a good reader or writer. For both reading and writing identical categories were identified by both groups. At first, there appears little difference between the two groups for reading awareness. However, closer examination revealed some important differences.

Both groups mentioned the same core factors. These are phonology, strategies, writing, experience/learning and memory/knowledge. Lots of Reading Recovery children however, contributed a category not mentioned by comparison children, namely 'making sense'. The comparison children mentioned behaviour, a category not contributed by Reading Recovery children. The fact that many children in the Reading Recovery programme highlighted making sense reflects their awareness of this aspect of reading.

Strategies and knowledge learned in Reading Recovery lessons are all taught predominantly using connected-text. This category could be attributed to the emphasis of the programme on teachers' questioning or prompts, such as "does that make sense?" (Clay, 1985, p.73). It may be that children mention it because it is one of a range of taught strategies. Nevertheless, the awareness of 'making sense' is essential to progress in reading as use of semantics provides one means for accessing the orthography of print.

The factor of behaviour defined by comparison children only, is possibly an outcome of classroom based experiences which carry connotations about being a reader. This illustrates what the children identify reading to be about. It is a finding consistent with that of Pinnell, Bradley, and Button (1990). In their study, first graders identified good behaviour as a characteristic of a good reader.

With writing awareness Reading Recovery children similarly identified a further category of 'making sense'. Again this was not found in the answers from the comparison group and this is important as it matches exactly their understandings expressed for reading. This root awareness is a key component for children learning to write. The complexity of the writing task lies in the mastery not only of transcriptional skills but also of the structural patterns of written language, and all this embedded in a communicative function which is context bound (Perera, 1984). This apparent recognition by young children with literacy difficulties who participate in an intensive tutorial programme suggests a non-linear development of writing ability in contrast to Kroll's (1981) model of four stages of writing acquisition.

It has been argued in Chapter Two on writing development that transcriptional skills can be learned while writing connected text. Children

can learn handwriting and spelling in the process of writing what they want to say (consolidation) and within a context of text-like language (differentiation), as well as in lessons specifically targeting these skills. That literacy learning may not be a linear process, and that reading and writing may be reciprocal learning processes are issues that have begun to accumulate in the literature (Lyons, Pinnel & DeFord, 1993).

6.9.4 Literacy Environments

Beard (1987) demonstrates in diagrammatic form (p. 232) the importance and relevance of considering home environment factors to children's literacy development. The findings in this section indicated similarities between the two groups for reading and writing. Group differences were not expected in this area as both groups of children have literacy difficulties in common. The only difference may have been in the amount of books taken home from school because Reading Recovery children daily take home a selection of books. Differences were not expected in this area as it is not directly related to the intervention. Daily tuition may have little bearing on home literacy environments. However, Wade and Moore (1993) reported that parents of children in Reading Recovery were more committed to reading with their children as a result of the programme.

Both groups indicated a preference to read or read most where support is available with the majority of this being school based. However, evidence suggests that many of these children do experience support or reading role models in the home. As previously mentioned, a criticism of the interview is the absence of a critical question about reading *to* children. The failure to ask this question suggests insufficient evidence to fully analyse home literacy environment and support.

In an American study Holland (1991) investigated how literacy programmes impacted on family literacy contexts. She interviewed family members of children receiving Reading Recovery (as opposed to the Reading Recovery children themselves) before, during and after the duration of the programme. It was found that family members of children in Reading Recovery reported support for children's reading in the following roles: models (siblings more than adults); providers; readers to children as well as readers of environmental print; and listeners. Perhaps not surprisingly, the majority of Reading Recovery children and comparison group children stated that they write more at school. Half of each group stated this was because they 'have to'. Other reasons included preferring to play at home or not having access to paper at home. This factor is found in Holland's (1991) study in which, while family members acted as providers, there was not a continuous supply of writing materials in most households.

When compared with the more book-oriented environment portrayed in this section on reading, it would seem that writing has a secondary status at home. However, in the role model question the interview lent itself to 'quantity' of adult writing and not whether it simply occurs or not. The results do indicate that many of these children experience a range of writing contexts at home, such as greeting cards, lists, and office work.

Holland (1991) found role models of day to day writing but these were mainly siblings rather than adults. Other roles reported by family members with regard to writing support were as spellers, scribes, receivers and interpreters. The findings in this study support Holland's results from more intensive interviewing. Writing in the home may be a less frequent, or less prominent activity than reading.

This supports the evidence found in this study that children with literacy learning difficulties do have access to literacy providers in the home. Holland's study was not a comparative one and so it was not possible to ascertain whether Reading Recovery stimulates more parental support. In this study both groups reported similar literacy environments in the home.

6.9.5 Metalinguistic Awareness

Metalinguistic awareness was not a predefined research initiative in this study. There is a growing expanse of relevant literature and studies beyond the scope of this thesis dealing with metalinguistic awareness. Evidence from this study shows that children are learning to talk *about* reading and print and develop a metalinguistic vocabulary.

Children were asked to define what makes a text hard or easy to read. Almost identical features were specified by both groups and it can be proposed that children view text complexity in terms of the appearance of print both in quantity and print size. If a book was laden with small print, the text would be conceived as difficult whether it contained only known words or not. Print size and amount of text per page are thereby important considerations for authors and publishers of early literacy texts.

With respect to 'word' complexity, again both groups of children identified similar properties. However, at this level there were subtle differences within the children's responses. All children receiving Reading Recovery had a clear concept of 'word' but this was not the case for at least two of the comparison group children. While this is a relatively small number, word concept is one of the first complex understandings children need to know as they learn to read. This signifies children's understanding that the flow of speech consists of separate words and is represented in print accordingly.

All Reading Recovery children were able to describe features of words whereas five children in the comparison group failed to articulate any understandings, stating that they could not read. Comparison group children did not appear to be able to examine words with the same metalinguistic approach as Reading Recovery children. This was particularly evident when the Reading Recovery children were clearly able to dissect words and explain their complexity even if they could read the words. That is, they did not simply define a word as easy just because they could read it; they were able to talk *about* the word in multi-faceted terms of length, phonology and orthography. It could be argued that this is an outcome of direct training for the analytic procedure of hearing sounds in words in the writing episode of the Reading Recovery lesson as described in detail by Clay (1985. pp. 64-67).

The impact of Reading Recovery therefore can be seen not only from reading scores, but in children's ability to think of words in terms of linguistic characteristics. Children exhibited an understanding not only of 'word' but also a phonemic awareness in their ability to analyse words in smaller units.

Griffith and Olson (1992) define phonemic awareness as the ability to examine language independently of meaning and to manipulate its component sounds. The examples cited in this study indicate the ability of Reading Recovery children to reflect on the internal structure of words.

Many comparison group children were able to talk about 'word' concepts but did not refer specifically to letters or sounds as did the Reading Recovery children. Francis (1973) and Downing (1970) claim children learn units of referent in order of letter before word, and word before sentence. This was not apparent in this study. Children often had an understanding of word before identifying letters and parts of words. Lomax and McGee

(1987) established a relationship between aspects of understanding the term 'word' and success in beginning reading. This study shows that Reading Recovery children are also able to analyse words in detail.

With regard to writing, the children in the two groups manifest some important differences as illustrated in their definitions of a 'difficult' piece of writing. Categories constructed from the data common to both groups included: the amount of writing required, features of presentation, writing which required drafting and that which contained hard or difficult words.

In this latter category, the Reading Recovery children mentioned as difficult, words which were not known (14). In other words, children from Reading Recovery differentiated between a word that was hard and not known and a word that was hard even though it was known. They could analyse the word versus their own ability. The comparison group children made no such distinction.

Copying and not being able to read back their writing were two additional aspects mentioned by the comparison group, neither of which appeared in the Reading Recovery group. A further aspect found in the Reading Recovery interviews was the issue of needing more time. Here children may be thinking of writing in the Reading Recovery lesson where time is at a premium and children may feel a particular piece of writing was hard to complete within time restraints.

The main finding, a thread that runs throughout the interviews, was the skill of Reading Recovery children in analysing words regardless of their own ability. This appears again in the findings for 'easy' pieces of writing. The comparison children mentioned more categories than the Reading Recovery group. Even where the same categories were generated, there were differences in emphasis. For example, ten comparison children

related ease of task to copying compared with only one Reading Recovery child. Both groups mentioned word length. The most striking difference is that no child in the comparison group referred to word complexity compared with ten Reading Recovery children. Children in the comparison group did not appear to be able to separate word analysis from ability.

Reading Recovery children identified easy texts because they contained 'easy' words. However, these were not necessarily short or high frequency words but were termed easy because they were now known. Future research might investigate whether Reading Recovery children write more with words they have learned and feel confident about or whether they retain the risk taking element evident in young children's early independent writing attempts. If children learn that spelling alone is the key to success, this may inhibit the development of ideas resulting in 'safe word' writing (Czerniewska, 1992).

For the purposes of this analysis the writing task was dissected as simply as possible into three elements of handwriting, spelling and thinking of ideas in order to encapsulate the transcriptional and compositional aspects. Twice as many comparison group children than Reading Recovery children reported handwriting as 'hard'. Once again Reading Recovery children seemed to have gained confidence and ability in this skill despite handwriting not being an explicit element of the Reading Recovery programme. However, attention to handwriting occurs incidentally in many Reading Recovery activities.

Reading Recovery children did not identify spelling as any easier than the comparison group children despite the deliberate focus in Reading Recovery lessons on hearing sounds in words, spelling patterns and learning sight vocabulary. 'Spelling' was not always understood in its contextual sense, notably in some comparison children's responses. Spelling was conceived

as tests and retained a connotation associated with this, rather than the spelling of a word in the process of writing a composition.

The National Writing Project (1987) found that the majority of children found spelling the hardest aspect of writing, while starting and ending the composition, punctuation and handwriting also presented difficulties. Cummings (1989) reported similar findings in his own school. The study presented in this thesis shows that younger children have already formed these views.

More comparison group children identified thinking of ideas as 'hard' compared with the Reading Recovery children. More Reading Recovery children declined a forced choice and identified each of the three elements as neither hard nor easy. It is difficult to ascertain the effect of Reading Recovery on children's writing with questions of this kind. Although they seem to be more secure in their understanding of the process, their identifications of 'hard' and 'easy' often bore little congruence to their ability. This raises the issue of validity. For example, a child may have identified handwriting as easy but their samples show appalling handwriting. Similarly for content and spelling. Analysis of writing development will be explored further in the analysis of Reading Recovery lesson observations. In comparison with a control group there appears little difference in perception of difficulty, particularly for spelling.

6.9.6 Strategies

Children were asked to identify strategies used for reading in two contexts. The results were very similar for children in both groups for reading and writing. The need for support, as opposed to the challenge of independence was evident in both groups, the predominant strategy being to ask in both home and school situations.

This is particularly of note for the Reading Recovery group as the content of Reading Recovery lessons is heavily oriented towards teaching for strategies. It may be that this evidence supports the concurrent findings whereby extrinsic attribution played a large part in Reading Recovery children's explanations for reading success, such that dependency may be viewed as appropriate.

Alternatively, the interview question needs to be considered and might have yielded more accurate information from the children if the format had suggested strategies for use in situations where no-one was available to ask.

Although numbers are small, Reading Recovery children did mention two related strategies not offered by children in the comparison group for reading. They referred specifically to 'going back' and 'going on'; that is, the use of context and syntactic cues. This again illustrates that Reading Recovery children are able to articulate strategies specifically taught in the Reading Recovery programme.

With the specific strategies given, there was very little difference between the two groups. The first strategy stated, 'miss out the word', needed clarification in the process of the interview administration as it became clear there were two pathways; to miss out the word and carry on regardless, or to miss out the word and return to it once overall meaning has been gleaned. Good readers often do this spontaneously. The second defined strategy was 'turn the page', seeking to identify children's ability to work at it or to miss out difficult parts. These were the only two strategies which indicated slight differences as illustrated in Table 6.10. Some children were not able to state whether they would use these strategies.

The fact that more Reading Recovery children would miss out a word suggests this is perhaps a more sophisticated strategy. It was nearly always qualified by the children in terms of intention to return or re-read. Comparison group children who indicated they would miss out a word did not all give evidence for an intention to re-read. Further questioning revealed that they were most likely to continue with the reading and ignore the word presenting difficulty. Conversely, but in support of this, more Reading Recovery children would persevere rather than turn the page, while more children in the comparison group would see page-turning as a viable option.

Table 6.10 Two reading strategies for both groups

	Reading Recovery (N = 33 responses)	Comparison (N = 30 responses)
miss out a word	25 (76%)	16 (53%)
turn the page	10 (30%)	17 (57%)

For writing, a few other strategies were identified for school, but for both groups asking was still the first choice, followed by sounding out and looking for the word. Answers from both groups were extremely similar in this area as they were for reading. It may be that for reading there are specific strategies that can be taught whereas for writing, whilst much depends on letter knowledge, much rests on phonemic awareness and ability to hear sounds in words as well as developing a good visual memory.

6.10 Conclusion

The interview was productive in drawing out children's understandings of writing and reading. Its limitations have been highlighted within the presentation of the findings. While pilot data allowed the interview to be adapted, further revisions are needed, such as inserting a question on children's experiences of being read to and omitting others, such as writing preferences. The inclusion of writing and using children's own texts and familiar books were innovative aspects of this literacy interview with young children and they appeared to be successful.

Children who experience difficulties with learning to write and read indicate a paucity of understanding of referents and metalinguistic awarenesses. However, in this study, many Reading Recovery children seemed to show a greater facility with text referents and an ability to use their growing metalinguistic vocabulary and understandings of the alphabetic system. Reading Recovery children identified a greater range of strategies for tackling writing and reading and could articulate these with an applied sense of purpose. This could be as a result of the direct teaching in Reading Recovery lessons. Many children in the comparison group seemed to be struggling more with the secretarial aspects of print and the utility of writing and reading. In Moore and Wade's (1993) consultative study, parents of children in Reading Recovery reported that their children showed increased confidence in their writing and reading abilities as they experienced success. Furthermore, parents noted changes in children's strategies in approach to text as they became increasingly independent and acquired problem-solving techniques. The study presented here corroborates their findings.

The difference in the children's experience focussed on in this study is the experience of intensive, holistic, daily one-to-one tutoring in Reading Recovery. Some differences in literacy understandings portrayed by the two interviewed groups were found. These may be partly due to the extra tuition of the specific nature provided by Reading Recovery. The vastness and variety of children's early literacy experiences renders it very difficult to attribute this effect to the programme alone. That Reading Recovery may play a role in the development of children's understandings of literacy when they are experiencing difficulties, is shown in the ease and confidence with which children in this study seemed to approach text. Reading Recovery makes no claim to assess how or why children are having difficulties, only to help children 'recover' and to do so quickly in order to achieve accelerated progress in reading and writing ability. This interview study, as with those of Moore and Wade (1993), provides greater validity in interpreting the effectiveness of Reading Recovery, rather than relying solely on statistical evaluations of reading attainment.

6.11 Reading Recovery Children Talking about the Programme

6.11.1 Introduction

This small section of the interview does not fit neatly into the comparative structure of the chapter. Rather, it was designed to explore Reading Recovery children's perceptions of the programme and to talk to them about their likes and dislikes of this intensive tutorial. The third section of the interview questions Reading Recovery children only (Appendix III).

These children are ordinary six-year-old children with literacy learning difficulties. To date there is no Reading Recovery research in this country which talks to the children themselves about their experience in the

programme. This section of the interview is an extension of the views of children in Reading Recovery presented previously in the comparative analyses.

6.11.2 Programme awareness

Of the total number interviewed, 30 reported knowing why they were in the programme and three did not. However, all were able to offer reasons why they thought they were having these special lessons and these were:

- because they could not read well 17
- because they needed to learn 14
- because they were learning well 2

The children were thus able to 'diagnose' themselves, as illustrated clearly by Child 27:

> Because then I couldn't write properly. But I still have to improve my handwriting.

6.11.3 Lesson Preferences

While the episodes of the Reading Recovery lesson are very distinct and extremely apparent for the Reading Recovery teacher who guides the child through the lesson, usually in the same order, it may be that for the child this is not so clear-cut. In order to analyse their perceptions of Reading Recovery, the parts of the lesson were specified and the child was reminded of the pattern of activities. They were then asked which parts they liked best and why. Their responses were:

Episode		Reason
read new book	16	newness/progression
writing	5	like it - 3; learn - 2
known books	4	easy
sentence strip	4	easy/liked
board work	6	easy/liked

There is no mention of the episode in which the teacher makes a running record assessment which requires the child to read independently, i.e. the new book from the previous day. Conversely, there is no mention of the episode in which the new book is introduced and child and teacher work on strategies and a new text. This enquiry was repeated for the episode least liked or not liked:

Episode		Reason
writing	6	hard/keep trying - 4; not enough time - 2
board work	1	hard to remember
beginning books	5	boring - 3; easy - 1; quantity - 1
sentence strip	2	boring
new book attempt	7	hard - 4; no choice - 2; long - 1
running record	2	hard
none	6	

Children's likes were often expressed by reference to other parts of the lesson as illustrated in the following examples.

"Likes":

> New book at the end of the lesson 'cos then we don't have to do the same book.
>
> (Child 23)
>
> New book 'cos if when you do it wrong you can remember it and next day remember it you can get it correct.
>
> (Child 9)

"Dislikes":

> You know them books what you know already. I don't like reading them over and over again because it gets a bit boring reading the same books.
>
> (Child 22)
>
> Putting words together [sentence strip]. It wasn't at all like reading and writing, a bit boring.
>
> (Child 27)

The running record episode is the only one not mentioned in the 'liked' episodes. This is interesting as the majority of classroom based teaching involves the teacher reading with a child a book taken home and practised. This differs slightly from the Reading Recovery tutorial in that the running record book is not taken home the previous day when it is introduced. It may be that it is the abandonment of teacher support for diagnostic purposes and the consequent need to work very hard at the text that distinguishes this episode from the others. Again there is no mention of the introduction to the new book in which teacher and child work together on the text.

6.11.4 Reading Recovery v Classroom

Reading Recovery is an intensive daily part of some children's lives, which they are expected to attend and to fully participate. What do these children actually think about reading and writing in the environments in which they operate at school? Children were asked to indicate their preferences for reading and writing in the classroom and in Reading Recovery lessons.

For writing the results were almost equally divided with 16 preferring Reading recovery lessons and 14 the classroom. Two were impartial.

Reasons expressed for preferring writing in Reading Recovery lessons were:

- help received 7
- choice of topic 2
- quietness 4
- not required to write much 1
- more time 1
- sense of achievement 1

Reasons for preferring classroom writing were:

- can choose when to write 1
- people to talk to 1
- easier 5
- write more 5
- no reason 5

An almost identical pattern emerged for reading context preferences with 17 preferring reading in Reading Recovery lessons and 14 preferring the classroom. One child as impartial.

For reading, reasons indicated for preferences for the classroom were:

- choose own books 4
- help received 2
- less hard work 4
- read with friend 2

Reasons indicated for preferring reading in Reading Recovery were:

- opportunity to read a lot 7
- help received 3
- enjoy books 4
- progress through levels 2
- quietness 2
- no ridicule 1

The open-ended questions enable children to offer more than one reason. Issues that arise from this pertain predominantly to the actual environment rather than to the tasks themselves. Combination examples serve to illustrate this for both preferences.

> Writing in the classroom 'cos I've got loads of people to talk to and get some ideas from. Sometimes I tell 'em my ideas. Sometimes they tell me their ideas.
>
> (Child 23)

> Writing and reading here (Reading Recovery room) 'cos it's quiet 'cos too noisy in the classroom and you don't have to keep stopping in the middle all the time if teacher in the classroom is telling someone off.
>
> (Child 29)

> Reading in Reading Recovery because it's more fun. In the class you can't get onto different levels 'cos they don't do that. Writing in Reading Recovery because I have to make up stories and I like doing that.
>
> (Child 12)

Hence children who prefer reading and writing in Reading Recovery are concerned with time, peace, space and opportunity to progress. Children who expressed a preference for reading or writing in the classroom are concerned with the social element of the learning environment and the choice of when they engage in the activity. Reading Recovery offers

children very little control over reading text and the most freedom with writing topic, although this is not always so, due to time constraints. This issue of control will be further explored in the chapters which follow on lesson observations.

6.11.5 Conclusion

Reading Recovery is hard work for children as well as teachers. The preferences for reading or writing in the classroom were almost equally divided. Reasons given show that these are largly determined by children's personal traits and idiosyncracies. Children were generally positive about their experience of Reading Recovery. The social context and culture of this one-to-one tutorial is ripe for social research pertaining to its role in children's school lives (Wertsch, 1994; Sylva, Hurry & Peters, 1996).

PART IV THE INTERACTIVE FRAMEWORK OF READING RECOVERY

CHAPTER SEVEN

THE WRITING EPISODE: FEATURES OF TEACHING AND LEARNING

7.1 Background to the Study

7.1.1 *Introduction*

Clay (1991) states there are probably many reasons why the tutoring programme has been effective and contends that an important contributing factor is the writing component. Graves (1973) emphasised the need to study writing events and the socioethnographic context of events. Research on the writing process has revealed its complexity. This part of the thesis focuses on the interaction between children and teachers during the writing episode of Reading Recovery lessons. Lyons, Pinnell and DeFord (1993) call for studies that look at instructional interactions in detail with qualitative analyses of teacher-child interactions.

Analysis and discussion of the interactive processes within the writing episode of Reading Recovery lessons are presented in two chapters. This introduction presents the conceptual framework, research questions and analysis procedures for the observational study of the writing episode. Analysis of the lessons is divided into two sections. This chapter presents analysis of the 'surface structure' of the lesson. This encompasses text generation, text production and the writing focus. Chapter Eight addresses

the interactive framework of the writing episode. The purpose is to describe the nature of the teacher-child interactions over time spent in the programme. Chapter Eight concludes with a summary and discussion of the data presented in both chapters.

7.1.2 Implications of Writing Research for the Present Study

The studies discussed in Chapters Two and Four, indicate the breadth and depth of research into writing development. In order to locate this study within such a range of literature, it will be useful to distinguish three broad categories of writing research. These are outlined in Table 7.1.

Table 7.1 Categories of research on writing

1. Descriptive studies which focus on writers themselves.
    i) case studies: e.g., Bissex (1980); Payton (1984);
    ii) accounts: e.g., Schickedanz (1990)
2. Research studies which focus on the writing process and on the writer/audience relationship: e.g., Clay (1975); Sulzby (1985); Dyson (1988)
3. Research which focuses on the end product.
    i) monitoring literacy standards: e.g., APU survey (1982)
    ii) assessing cognitive and affective development in writing: e.g.,Wilkinson et al (1980)

Category one offers descriptive insights using highly personal and interpretive evaluations. Studies focus on describing children's written products. Category two encompasses more systematic studies involving individuals and groups. These studies explore a particular context and the complex relationship between writer, audience and environment. Despite

the comparatively small numbers of participants in these studies, they provide a perspective on the development of children as writers within educational establishments. Studies in this category have been instrumental for exploring children's underlying conceptualisations. The findings from these studies are complemented by research in Category three. These studies are mostly conducted in the experimental mode in order to assess and evaluate various aspects of writing development. This part of the thesis aims at offering the same power of rigour while the source of the data is consistent with the ethos of Category two, that of a classroom related context.

The purpose of the next section is to very briefly outline issues pertaining directly to this study. This is because the complexity of issues reviewed much earlier in the thesis needs to be related to the specific context of the study presented here.

7.1.3 Text Generation

There is a dual role complexity here which has been examined in Chapter Four.

It has been proposed that talk has a vital role to play in children's learning to write. It has also been argued that while talk may be the vehicle to assist that development, speech and writing have distinct grammatical and syntactic organisations. While the sentence is not a characteristic of speech it is the basic textual unit of writing. Part of the Reading Recovery writing episode is to use oral language to generate a sentence for writing. The writing process in Reading Recovery lessons is the vehicle for learning about print concepts such that transcriptional features can be taught while composing and producing a message in written text.

It is not just the issue of sentence production that presents difficulties. Caccamise (1987), in a similar vein to the work of Bereiter and Scardamalia (1982), identifies a difficulty with the reliance on speech in idea generation. The young child has to hold onto both generating and producing text, which engenders powerful constraints on what to say, how to say it, how to remember it and get it into print. This study examines how teachers support children with literacy learning difficulties to generate text.

7.1.4 Text Production

The writing episode produces 'assisted', rather than 'independent' text. It is the study of 'how' the writing was produced that requires investigation. Wilkinson et al (1980) argue that "examining writing development by counting words, sentence length or clause type, neglects ...the construction of meaning" (p. 38, in Beard, 1980). This study examines how teachers support children with literacy learning difficulties to produce text, looking more at the interaction surrounding word level production within sentence construction.

7.1.5 Writing Focus

The two aspects of writing, composition and transcription have often been separated in teaching contexts. However in Reading Recovery, teachers show children how the graphic/alphabetic system operates while jointly engaged in writing connected text.

The work of Bereiter and Scardamalia recognises the many demands early learners cope with in producing written text (Scardamalia, Bereiter & Goelman, 1982). They analysed oral written language differences and

portray a model of the writing process by which writers intend, plan, produce, and check. The components of the Reading Recovery writing episode - joint attention to compose a sentence, establishing the sentence to be written, producing and re-reading the text - appear to conform to this pattern of coping with the multi-level process. This study examines what teachers attend to while engaged in text writing with children in Reading Recovery.

7.1.6 Interactive Framework

In Chapter Two the perspective was developed regarding the child as an active, constructive learner and extended to that of a collaborative learner in socio-cultural contexts, of which Reading Recovery is one microcosm. If the process of literacy construction occurs in interaction with others, then, within schools "the writing a child develops is the result of the interactions between the teacher, child and the task" (Czerniewska, 1992, p.75).

Bruner (1985) recognises Vygotsky's concept of mediation as a critical function of 'scaffolding' the learning task. In this respect, Bruner emphasises the transactional nature of learning rather than a transmission from tutor to novice. Bruner describes three key elements which arise from Vygotsky's writings: the props or instruments that make it possible for the child to go beyond the present level of development; the specific processes which enable the child to participate in vicarious learning; the procedures that the enabler in the transaction uses to cultivate learning. Thus, it is the learner, teacher and created text which need to be studied in conjunction with each other.

Research on the nature of interaction has been discussed in Chapter Four. The nature of interactions in school predominantly consists of teacher/child/teacher turns. The level of analysis in many studies,

including Lyons, Pinnell and DeFord (1993) on Reading Recovery, is that of alternating responses and distinction between types of teacher question. Cazden (1988) urges that little is to be gained from frequency counts and that "if instead, we consider discourse in longer sequences, we can think about the potential value of classroom discourse as scaffold and as reconceptualisation" (p. 101). This methodological interpretation is applied to the analysis of discourse from Reading Recovery writing lessons in this study. Furthermore, Bloome (1994) emphasises examining stretches of teacher talk and conversation in order to balance the structure with the substance of interaction and to ground these "within the broader and multiple historical and social contexts of a particular conversation" (p. 235) rather than examining sequences in isolation. In this study the lessons observed are the social contexts. Observations throughout the duration of a child's programme allow interaction to be placed within the historical context of the child's time in Reading Recovery.

7.2 Research Questions

The overall aim is to explore the interactions in writing episodes of Reading Recovery, focussing on the child as well as adult role. Research questions were identified as follows:

Lesson components

1. What status is writing given within the lesson?
2. Is there change in time and content from the beginning to the end of the programme?

Text generation

1. Which topics do children write about?
2. How do teacher and child arrive at a sentence to be written?

3. Are there differences in how text is generated?

Text production

1. What support is given in writing text?
2. Does the child show increased responsibility over time?

Writing focus

1. What elements of writing do Reading Recovery teachers focus on?
2. In what ways are these elements focussed on?

Interactive framework

1. What is the structure of interaction within the episode?
2. Can the interactions within the writing episode be conceptualised as scaffolding procedures?
3. Do the patterns of interaction within the writing episode change over time, i.e. with the child's increasing command over writing?

Questions on lesson components, text generation, text production and writing focus are addressed in this chapter. Questions on the interactive framework are addressed in Chapter Eight.

7.3 Methodology

7.3.1 Introduction

The observational lesson data collected during this longitudinal study is vast. Data for this part of the study were collected in conjunction with the larger comparative studies presented in Chapters Five and Six. Nine lessons were observed, audio-taped and transcribed during a Pilot study previously carried out in conjunction with piloting the interview (Chapter

Six). It was decided to focus on the writing episode of the Reading Recovery lesson. Other episodes, such as the introduction and reading of the new book, originally planned for detailed analysis, are not reported in this thesis. The reasons for this focus are:

1. To contribute to redressing the balance of research interest in the literacy field which has been dominated by research on reading.
2. To maintain continuity within this thesis by looking at the process of writing development to complement the part of the study on writing products (Chapter Five)

7.3.2 Participants

Children were drawn from the full sample (n=70) which is outlined in Table 5.1. It was difficult to gain access to observe Reading Recovery lessons in some L.E.A.s due to the political climate at the time. Nineteen children and seven teachers in three L.E.A.s in contrasting locations participated during the years 1992-1993.

Two children were dropped from the study during the years; one moved away and was not possible to follow up and one did not come close to discontinuation by the end of the school year. Hence data were only available for the beginning of their programmes.

7.3.3 Procedure

The logistics for collecting the data were very complex for one person to carry out, due to the large distances between schools and the numbers of children in Reading Recovery at the same time. In order to collect detailed evidence of Reading Recovery lessons over time, children were observed

twice, once at the beginning and once towards the end of their programme. Observations commenced after the first few weeks of Roaming Around the Known.

A sub-sample of 4 children (mixed gender) in two L.E.A.s (4 teachers) were observed weekly throughout their time in Reading Recovery. The following data were collected, and a total of 77 lessons were observed.

1. For each lesson, detailed field notes were made incorporating time, physical and non-verbal communication moves.
2. A lesson observation pro-forma was designed to record time, content, interactive exchanges, cueing systems and word analysis to enable documentation of the whole lesson.
3. Most of the lessons were audio-taped and fully transcribed.
4. All sub-sample observations (n=49) were audio-taped and fully transcribed.
5. The practice page and writing page from each observation were copied so that it was possible to match talk directly to the point of writing.

The whole of the lesson was observed, audio-taped and transcribed, not just the writing episode. This database was then managed by a coding system in order to match each child's field notes, observation pro-forma, lesson transcription and writing sample.

7.3.4 Contexts

There were diverse sites for Reading Recovery lessons as reported in Chapter Six. Depending on the size of the room, the desk was against a wall with a white easel board placed either behind or to the side of the child and teacher. Books were arranged in levels in baskets or on shelves. Two

locations also had chalkboards and sand trays in addition to the plastic letters and range of writing implements present at all sites.

Audio taping equipment was placed on the table between child and teacher. All Reading Recovery teachers sat at the child's right hand side. The observer sat directly to the left of the child (sideways on) or behind the teacher and child with a view of the texts being worked on. Visitors and parents often observed lessons. Observation was not intrusive and a rapport was built between the children in the sub-sample, the teachers and myself.

7.4 Procedure for Analysis

Details of coding categories with a rationale are presented in each section of the analysis. First an outline of the procedures used for the entire observational study is presented.

7.4.1 Time and Content

All lessons were analysed for time and content. Lesson content was divided into writing, reading and other activities. Writing in this study refers to writing a story or sentence composed and produced in collaboration with the teacher. Reading refers to the child's reading of connected text. It does not include structure formation of words or reading words in isolation. Other includes all other elements of the lesson, such as transitions between activities, administration, time spent on board work including that which occurred 'within' a writing or reading episode. This categorisation structure is based on Lyons, Pinnell and DeFord (1993).

7.4.2 Text Generation

In order to document how teacher and child move into the writing episode from the previous one, both quantitative and qualitative analyses were applied. Choice of texts were classified, coded and quantified for 75 writing episodes. All transcripts and lesson format observation records were then structurally analysed for indicators of generative style.

7.4.3 Text Production

Transcriptions, field notes, lesson format observation records and copies of the writing produced were coded to determine the nature of text production. Words were classified as teacher or child, if written entirely independently. Joint construction were those words teacher and child worked on together whether using Elkonin (1973) boxes, or sharing the task on the practise page or writing straight onto the writing page. Sentence construction comparisons over time were made.

7.4.4 Writing Focus

Transcriptions and lesson format observation records were coded for teaching content. Codes were constructed using the data rather than applying a formula to the data. These are content codes, and categories were determined from the aspects of writing focussed on by the teacher.

7.4.5 Interactive Framework

Beginning and end of programme observations (n=75) were coded according to speaker initiation or response and content of utterance. All sub-sample

observation transcripts were subsequently coded (n=49) to enable analysis of how change in interaction over time occurred. In-depth analysis of the writing episode was necessary not only to complement the analysis of text generation, text production and writing focus, but to determine patterns of talk related to writing construction.

Teacher talk was classified by type. Seven types of talk were constructed from the data. These are not the same as classifying types of question but constructed from the content and purpose of the talk. Child talk (response and initiate) were coded in relation to interaction i.e., in conjunction with teacher talk, rather than isolate score counting, and so cycles of talk were established. All this was done with the written product to hand so that it was possible to see at what point talk was interwoven around written text production.

Reading Recovery Writing Episode: The Surface Structure of the Lesson

7.5 Findings

Findings are presented under the headings for analysis. The first four sections provide a detailed picture of the surface features of the writing episode in Reading Recovery.

7.5.1 Time and Content

Reading Recovery lessons conform to a fixed nature and format with a specified time allowance of thirty minutes. It was not anticipated therefore that there would be great variation in lesson time and content across Reading Recovery sites.

Amount of time spent on each episode at Time A (beginning of Reading Recovery programme) and Time B (end of Reading Recovery programme) for each child was recorded. Episodes timed were board work (including use of the board within other episodes), familiar book reading, running record, writing, sentence strip, introducing the new book and new book attempt. Where administration lasted more than 30 seconds this time was recorded as other within the lesson components. Mean times for lesson components were calculated and the lesson episode times were then allocated writing, reading or other. Percentages for these components at Time A and Time B are shown in Table 7.2 and Figures 7.1 and 7.2.

The average lesson for Time A was 34.1 minutes. The average lesson for Time B was 40 minutes, both slightly longer than the stipulated 30 minutes for Reading Recovery lessons. Time spent on board work decreased by almost two minutes from Time A to Time B. The amount of time spent on reading familiar texts and running records increased. This is most likely due to the increase in text length and complexity.

Table 7.2 ***Percentage of time spent on reading, writing and other at Time A and Time B***

	Time A (N=17 children)* Mean	Time B (N=17 children) Mean
Reading	48.97	61.5
Writing	25.81	22.25
Other	25.22	16.25

* These children participated in the studies reported in Chapters Five and Six.

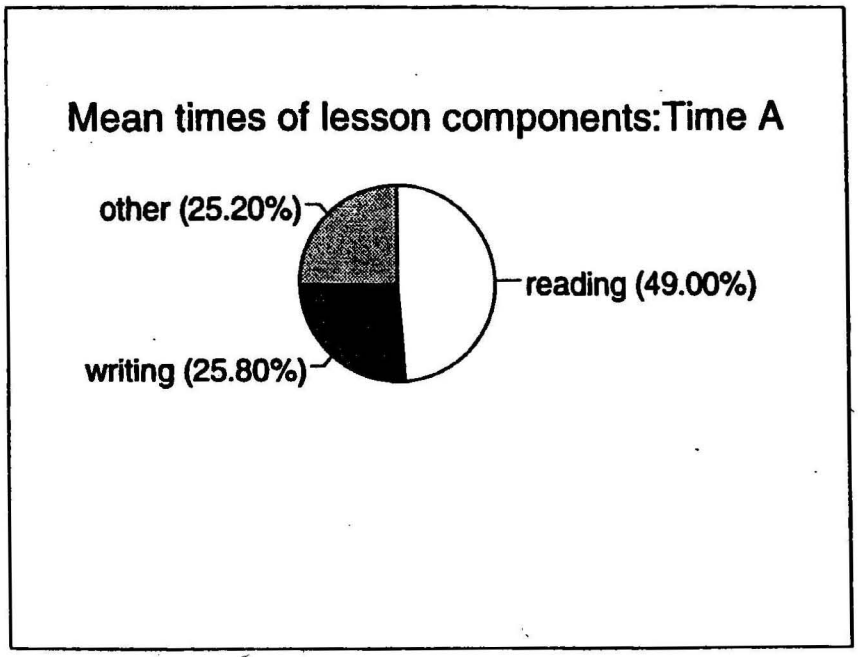

Figure 7.1 *Mean times of lesson components at Time A*

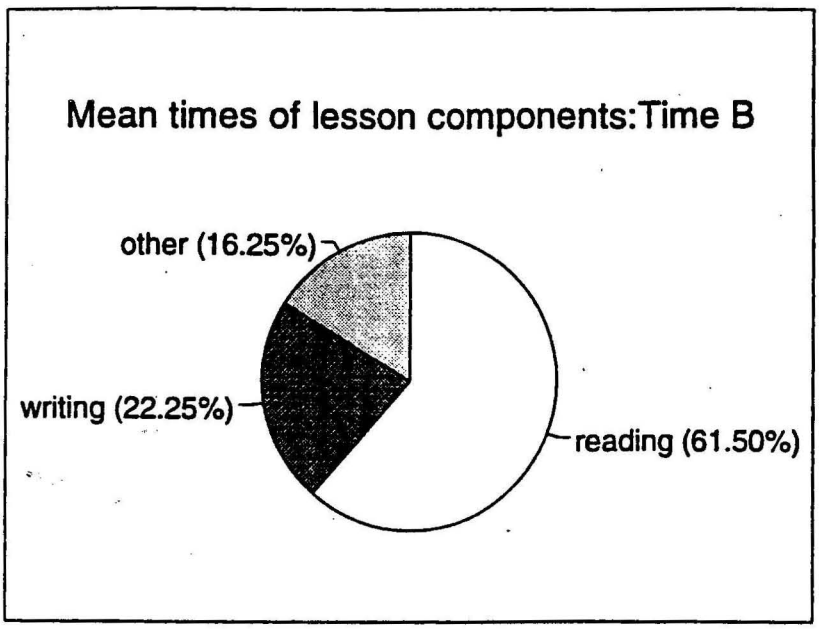

Figure 7.2 *Mean times of lesson components at Time B*

The percentage of time spent on writing was less at Time B than at Time A. While the separate components of the lesson are not reported in this summative table, the cut up sentence episode remained constant but three teachers (seven children) eliminated this at Time B as the teachers regarded it as unnecessary by then. The time spent introducing texts dropped, while the time spent on new book attempt rose, as shown in Table 7.3. This is probably due to the reduced need for teachers to introduce texts in detail as children's independence in problem-solving grows. Conversely time attempting the new text increases as children develop their self-extending systems and operate on longer and more complex texts with growing independence.

Table 7.3 Mean times spent on introduction and new book attempt at Time A and Time B

	Time A (N=17) Minutes	Time B (N=17) Minutes
Introduction of new book	2.4	2.1
New book attempt	4.1	7.4

Table 7.2 shows that nearly half the total time is spent on reading at Time A. At Time B, this discrepancy widens with only a third of the total amount of time spent on writing as on reading.

In order to confirm the pattern of time allocation throughout the duration of the programme, all observations from the four sub-sample children (i.e., the four children who were observed weekly and are part of the sample of 17) were analysed for mean time spent on reading, writing and other. Time spent on these elements is presented in Table 7.4.

Table 7.4 ***Average amount of time (minutes) spent in reading and writing for the total number of lessons in the sub-sample***

Number of observations	Child J N=10	Child S N=14	Child D N=14	Child C N=11	Mean
Reading	21.4*	16.1	17.3	22.4	19.3
Writing	10.1 range 3.5-13	6.4 range 5-9	6.9 range 5-11	8.6 range 5 - 13	8
Other	6.3	6.9	6.6	6.2	6.5
Range	31 - 45	24 - 37	33 - 38	32 - 53	34.28

*time in minutes

Ranges are shown to give a fuller picture of the true variation. The mean amount of time spent on reading is more than twice that spent on writing for the duration of the programme.

7.5.2 Text Generation

Topics for writing were coded from the data, again for Time A and Time B for each child. This coding was applied to the data from the four sub-sample children. Three content codes were evident, with two subsidiary ones,

(Figure 7.3). Once the topics were coded and identified, transcripts and lesson observation sheets were examined for sentence generation. The data were then coded for child, teacher or joint generation. This process was applied to Time A and Time B and findings are presented in Table 7.5.

T	about previous text read
TI	text as stimulus for imaginative story
TE	text as stimulus for experience
E	about personal experience
S	about school related incident

Figure 7.3 Categories for text topic (n=75)

While the topic for the writing episode is intended to be the child's initiative in Reading Recovery, it can be seen that at Time A and Time B the teacher generated the majority of sentences (53%). Independent child generation decreased from Time A to Time B, while joint generation increased to that of equal balance with child generation at Time B.

Children did not generate sentences using the previous story read as a stimulus. Joint generation was predominately school or text related. This indicates teachers use of shared knowledge as a resource for text topics. Topics generated by children were predominantly experience or text related.

Examples for each of the combinations of text generation are shown in Extracts 7.1 and 7.2 in order to illustrate child, joint and teacher generated topics. Transcription conventions used for Extracts are detailed in Appendix IV (p 361). While it can be considered that teacher-child talk is text itself, the examples are classified as intra-text and extra-text, i.e., those embedded or derived from book reading in Reading Recovery and those not associated directly to a book shared in Reading Recovery.

Table 7.5 Text generation at beginning and end of programme

	Time A				total	Time B					total
	E	S	T	TE		E	S	T	TE	TI	
C	4	0	2	0	6 35%	2	1	1	0	0	3.5%
J	0	2	0	0	2 12%	1	1	2	0	0	3.5%
T	3	1	3	2	9 53%	2	3	2	1	1	3%

C = child; J = joint; T = teacher

E = experience; S = school; T = text; TI = text to story; TE = text to experience

The following examples demonstrate each of the categories presented in Table 7.5. Transcript examples are labelled as Extracts.

Extract 7.1 Text Generation: Intra-Text Examples (See Appendix IV for Transcription Conventions)

Child Generation

T: Right. What are we going to write about today? Have you got something you can write or shall we do something about the book? Well you tell me a sentence that you want to write then.

C: **Move on frog**

T: Who's saying that?

C: The rabbit said move on, move on frog.

T: Right that sounds quite a nice sentence. Shall we get started then?

C: Yeh

(Child 1)

Joint Generation

T: Let's see if we can use that in our sentence today. **That.** Don't forget the beginning part, and the end part was like at. What shall we write? Oh, that's not yours. What do you want to write with **that** in it. Shall we perhaps write about that book?

C: Ooh the very bad wolf, yeh!

T: Yeh? What shall we say then? ( ) We could say something that mum said, do you remember she said

C: Oh yeah

T: **Mum said**

C: You

T: **See that the big**

C: Bad **bad wolf**

T: Doesn't or does not, we'll do it the same, **does not get you**. Right OK. **See**. Can you remember how to write that? (**See that the big bad wolf does not get you**.)

(Child 12)

Teacher Generation

T: Right OK, let's think about what happened in that book. What did dad buy Joe, shall we write about that bit? Why did he buy the bike?

C: (inaud)

T: But what was special about Joe in that book? Do you remember? Was it his birthday? His birthday was it? ( ) [*checks in book*] It was Joe's birthday. OK shall we make up a sentence about that. **It was Joe's birthday and dad bought him a bike**. That's a long one isn't it. Can we write the word **it** to start with?

(Child 7)

Teacher - Text to Experience

T: OK. Right, can you get your writing book out? Nice sentence today please. What are you going to write? Have you ever grown a seed, planted seeds? Do you remember which ones you did? Did they grow into flowers? Yeh? Do you want to write about that? What do you want to say?

C: (inaud) flower one

T: Did you plant the seed? Did you plant the seed? Do you want to say that? **I planted**

C: **I planted the seed**

T: What did they grow into?

C: They growed

T: Now does that sound right, they growed? Do you remember when we were looking at this word, **they grew**

C: Grew

T: **They grew into**

C: into

T: what?

C: a flower

T: **flowers**

J: flowers

(I planted some seeds and they grew into flowers.)

(Child 4)

Extract 7.2 Text Generation: Extra-Text Examples

Child about Experience

T: Where's your writing book then? I thought I saw your book.

C: (reads) Lucy. Do Lucy do Reading Recovery now?

T: Lucy certainly does. OK .What shall we write then?

C: mmm

T: About the book? Something else you want to write about?

C: **I am going to a party.**

T: Oh, when's that?

C: On tomorrow for it's my cousin's birthday.

T: Right OK. Now we can write that in two sentences.

(Child 5)

Teacher about Experience

T: I know why you were away, for Eid wasn't it? Did you have new clothes? Yes, so what shall we write?

C: I had a new clothes

T: **I had some new clothes for Eid.** Did you go anywhere?

C: Yeh, church

T: You go to the mosque? I think that's important. **I went to the mosque.**

(Child 16)

Child about School

C: Story time. ( ) I know. **I fooled Rose**

T: You fool, **I fooled Rose**, that's short. It's a good story. By, what did you do to me?

C: **By saying Sally had a nose bleed.**

T: Right. Let's have it again. Tell me your story again. **I**

C: **I fooled Rose by saying Sally had a nosebleed.**

(Child 6)

Joint about School

C: Miss, I got one more page here

T: Don't worry about that, what are we going to do today? Shall we write about the book? Have you got a bike or a

C: Got two punctured wheels

T: Have you? Oh dear. Have to get new patches won't you. What do you want to write then? Shall we write about the book today or is there something else you've got? Do you want to write about that or do you want to write about the assembly we did this morning for Mrs. Spike?

C: About assembly

T: What shall we say? What happened in the assembly? ( ) Anything, quickly. Tell me the bit you liked best, what was the best part? when the children were doing the play? Did you like that bit? Did you like it when she got her presents? Yeh, shall we write that then. What did we do? **We gave Mrs.**

C: **Spike some presents**

(Child 5)

Teacher about School

T: OK. Let's come and do some writing. Shall we try and use that word **this** in your writing? What can you think of with **this** in it? what sentence? Let's see, did you like that book?

C: [*screws up face*]

T: Or was it hard?

C: A little bit hard

T: Shall we say that then? **This book is a little bit hard**. That'll be a nice sentence. OK. **This**. Off you go straight away see if you can remember it. **This**. [**For me**, was added to the written text later without negotiation]

(Child 16)

Table 7.5 shows that teachers generated 53% of the sentences whether text, school or experience related. However, on several occasions when a teacher generated a sentence related to a book, the child overruled this and the sentence became a child generated one about a personal experience. This happened at Time A and Time B. Examples cited in Extract 7.3 illustrate this process. These extracts suggest that the framework of Reading Recovery not only supports children having difficulty forming a spoken 'sentence', but also has the flexibility to allow them to lead the interaction.

Extract 7.3 Teacher Text transformations to Child Experience

Example 1

T: Right, what are we gonna write today then? Take your elbows down. What shall we write, what sentence? Shall we write /something about the book?/

C: /I want this one/

T: What did the big boy do to the little boy hmm? Alright we'll change it if you want to. (*pen*)

C: /I don't want that colour/

T: /What shall we write then?/ Tell me the sentence.

C: I don't want that colour

T: Oh just use it for now 'cos they're all running out.

C: /Is it nearly lunch time?/

T: /What would you like to write?/ What would you like to write?

C: **I like my, my sister's little black cat.**

T: Oh you're not going to write about the book then? ( ) Alright then. Start writing. You can do I.

(Child 3)

Example 2

T: OK. What are you going to write about? What story or do you want to write about Naughty Norman. No, let's write about him making his cracking noises shall we. OK. What're you going to say? Quickly.

C: I'm gonna say, my dad's picking me up today.

T: No. You've written that much too often. I want you to write something about the story. ( )

C: **I've got loads of books at home.** 'Cos I haven't writed that.

T: Have you been reading them?

C: Yeh (*C continues to chat. T talks over*)

T: Let's have a sentence please. Tell me the whole sentence before you write it.

C: **I've got loads of books at home.** ( ) and a computer

(Child 13)

In order to examine more closely the apparent teacher domination in sentence generation (53%), the same procedure for coding topic and sentence generation was applied to the 49 observation transcripts for the sub-sample which monitors Reading Recovery throughout the programme. This process revealed a different perspective, suggesting that during the weeks of Reading Recovery, children do have the opportunity to take control of the writing topic. The data from the four sub-sample children were collated and percentages calculated which are shown in Table 7.6.

While joint generation of topic occurs much less often (the same percentage as that calculated for all children at Time A), children independently generated the topic 51% of the time. This is in contrast to the 23.5% of the time children generated topics when only beginning and end of the year lessons were analysed. When Reading Recovery lessons throughout the programme are taken into account, teachers generate topics 37% of the time as compared with 53% of the time if looking only at beginning and end of the programme.

In two of the four sub-sample cases, a clear pattern emerged, whereby the first half of the observations showed predominantly teacher generations and the second half showed predominantly child generations. This marks their independent undertaking of this role in the latter part of the

programme. Another child in the sub-sample had a unique experience in using the writing opportunity for many real purposes. While this data could form the basis of a detailed case study, Extract 7.4. illustrates a few of the purposeful sentences generated by the child, and a dialogue excerpt from one lesson. This demonstrates the role of writing for this child in Reading Recovery as recognised by child and teacher.

Table 7.6 Sub-sample topic generation throughout the programme

	T	E	S	TE	Total	Percent
Child	2	16	7	0	25	51%
Joint	1	2	3	0	6	12%
Teacher	10	3	2	3	18	37%
Total					49	

T = text; E = experience; S = school ; TE = text translated to experience

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Extract 7.4 Child generated sentences from one sub-sample

Observation . When is it going to be Valentines Day?

Observation . My dog needs a new battery.

Observation . Why hasn't my dad got my bell on my bike?

Example dialogue:

T: Yeh, we're gonna write a long one today and you're gonna try and make your writing nice and neat. What's your story?

C: Ooh let me think, and there is thinking time, before you say that! ( ) **Why hasn't my dad got my bell on my ( ) bike?**

T: Say your whole story again.

C: I, **why hasn't my dad got my bell on my bike?**

T: OK. **Why hasn't my dad got my bell on my bike**? I think you use this story writing time to write messages to your dad at home, don't you? **Why hasn't my dad got my bell on my bike**?

(Child 6)

7.5.3 Text Generation Styles

The process by which a text for writing is established has been implicitly shown in Extracts 7.1 and 7.2. This is an important issue because oral language is being used to construct the syntax of a written sentence. On some occasions children voiced the established sentence and then lapsed into speech-like text which was not incorporated into the written product.

While analysing all 75 writing episodes, two distinctive styles of generating and establishing a text for writing emerged from the data. Text generation is concerned not with the topic content or who generated the sentence but how the sentence moved from the oral domain into a written product.

The two styles of establishing a sentence are termed Sentence Fixing and Sentence Formulating. With sentence fixing, the teacher ensures that a sentence is orally finalised and repeated several times before writing commences. With sentence formulating, writing may start with only the first few words established. The text continues to be composed through talk, as the sentence is being written.

Segments from transcripts depicting each style are presented in Extracts 7.5 and 7.6.

Extract 7.5 Sentence Fixing

Example 1

T: What are you going to write today?

C: Sometimes when I go down I fall over (inaud) [*following on from interim conversation between board and writing*]

T: Is that what you're going to write? What are you going to write? (inaud) What are you going to jump on?

C: A bouncy castle

T: A bouncy castle. Is there one in our school?

C: mmm on the field

T: On the field. What're you going to write? What're you going to write Alex? ( ) What's your story going to say?

C: I'm going to the, **I'm going on the bouncy castle.**

T: That's a good story. **I'm going on the bouncy castle.**

C: **I'm going on the bouncy castle. I'm going on the bouncy castle.** [*begins to write*] I'm g g ( ) going ( ) going to the

T: You said **I'm going <u>on</u> the bouncy castle**. You don't change your story half way through.

(Child 9)

Example 2

T: Right. What are you going to write about this morning? About your sewing that you were doing when I came into your classroom. Um?

C: I like sewing.

T: You like sewing. Who helps with sewing in your classroom?

C: mummy

T: Well perhaps we could write something about sewing could we?

C: Yup

T: Tell me something else about sewing then.

C: Um, I did a rabbit.

T: What, you sewed a rabbit did you? Goodness me. So what's your story

going to say then? Write about mummy coming in and doing rabbits. So what's your sentence going to say?

C: **I like mummy coming in.**

T: **I like mummy coming in.**

C: Yes

T: **I like mummy coming in.** That sounds right OK. Choose a pen. Have a pink one. I want you to say that sentence again so it's really fixed in your head.

C: **I like mummy coming in.**

T: Say it normally

C: **I like mummy coming in.**

T: Again

C: **I like mummy coming in.**

T: Now write the story. Good girl.

(Child 6)

Example 3

T: OK. You tell me what you're going to write in your story.

C: Well, I only (inaud) I'll tell you tomorrow, I don't really know what it looks like. [*following on from earlier conversation*]

T: Sure, well tell me what happened to you this morning then.

C: I found a video on, on, in the um post thing and

T: Well that doesn't really make sense. Let's try it again. **I found a video**

C: **On**

T: On, keep going

C: **On the doorstep**

T: That will be great. What you said was, **I found a video on the doorstep.** Can you tell me your story please.

C: **I found a video on my doorstep**

T: Say it one more time.

C: **I found a video on a doorstep**

T: You change that every time. **I found a video on my doorstep.** Say it with me.

T & C: **I found a video on my doorstep**

T: **On my doorstep.** Remember.

(Child 15)

Extract 7.6 Sentence Formulating

Example 1

T: Right, Jane, writing

C: Write about that?

T: Well you tell me what do you want to write? Come on quickly. How about writing about where you went, you went yesterday. Where did you go yesterday?

C: The post office

T: Right, and what did you do?

C: Put the letters in

T: Right OK. So you could write

C: I

T: **I went to the**

C: **post office**

T: **and**

C: put, **helped the post office man.**

T: Alright then, **I**, you can get started on, and **went**...[*interaction continues as they write together. After writing the word* ***and****, the sentence changes in the process of being composed*]...

T: And helped, **put**, can you write **put**?

C: put, **to put**

T: **to put** OK...[*the sentence becomes not* ***helped the post office man*** *but reverts back to* ***put the letters in****. The sentence is then extended to that which was not even mentioned initially*]...

T: **Put the letters in**

C: [*writes*] in, in I **in a**

T: the box? a box? Where did you put them?

C: a bag

T: **a bag**. Alright then **[I went to the post office and helped to put the letters in a bag.]**

(Child 1)

Example 2

T: What shall we write then quickly? mmm? Using that word **want**. What do you want? I know what I want! I want lots of things. Right I want, you can do it without, yeh you can use that. **I want**, write those two

down....[*writing starts before Child has uttered a word or any idea where the sentence is going is established*]

T: ...what do you want?

C: birthday present

T: When's your birthday then?

C: After Christmas

T: Aah well you've got quite a long time to wait. I want a birthday present. What present do you think it will be?

C: er no I want money for um

T: I know what we can do. We can write **I want money for my birthday** and then you can tell me what you'll buy with the money.

C: You know for my birthday when I was seven, guess how much I had?

T: How much?

C: Ten pounds

T: 'cor that's a lot. richer than me! Right, money, what's that gonna start with...[*Continue writing sentence without yet establishing what child will write for the next part*]

T: ...Right what would you buy with the money then?

C: er birthday um

T: If you had lots of money what are you gonna buy, put it altogether and buy one big thing?

C: er ( )

T: Hurry up, anything. Just say anything that you think you might buy

C: Colouring book

T: Alright then, so how you gonna write that? [**I want money for my birthday. I am going to buy a colouring book**.]

(Child 5)

Example 3

T: What's your story going to be about today.

C: I, **I went swimming**

T: You went swimming. where did you go swimming? At school?

C: [*nods*]

T: I went swimming in the school pool. Can we add a bit more to it 'cos **I went swimming**'s only three words and I know you can write more than that.

C: I went swimming and I swimmed ( )

T: How do you swim? Can you tell me a bit more about it? I went swimming and I swimmed. OK Can we think of something more interesting to say so that you're telling me how you can swim. What's your favourite thing doing in the water, 'cos I know you're a good swimmer.

C: swim

T: Can you swim on your back or on your tummy?

C: tummy

T: Oh right. Do you doggy paddle like that or do you swim like that?

C: Like that

T: Show me, show me how you do your arms. That's breast stroke isn't it, breast stroke. Alright so you could write about that. I went swimming and

C: I

T: No, we'll have your story before your writing. I went swimming and

C: I

T: I went swimming

C: and I paddled

T: paddled, paddled? I think you swam didn't you? Do you need armbands. You don't need armbands. You can swim without armbands, you could write that couldn't you, try that. I went swimming and

C: I didn't have armbands

T: Right that sounds a brilliant story. I went swimming /and I didn't have armbands/

C: /I didn't have armbands/

T: Say that again

C: **I went swimming and I didn't have armbands**

T: again

C: I didn't have armbands

T: Where's the **I went swimming**? **I went swimming and I didn't have armbands**. Say all that

C: **I**

T: **I went**

C: **went swimming and I didn't have armbands**

T: Right off you go and write your story. Well done. [*This appears like Sentence Fixing, which it is at this stage. However, as the child writes, the sentence changes and the teacher does not insist on sticking to the original.*]...

T: What's the rest of your story. **I went swimming and I**

C: I don't know

T: Listen carefully, don't

C: Don't [*writes*]

T: Good

C: n need need n, i, i

T: No **need**. Listen to my mouth, not nid need need. two Es **need**. What's the last letter?

C: d

[***Didn't have**, originally set, became **don't need**, and the teacher let this go as it made sense.*]

(Child 10)

Moving from the oral domain to the written product involves setting ideas in a text-like structure, i.e., a sentence. The Reading Recovery handbook suggests that teachers elicit a sentence from the child which is then repeated by the teacher and written down for reference. These examples show that this is not always the case. Children do not always take the responsibility for generating the topic. It has been shown here that a text for writing is just as likely to be formulated during the process as it is to be fixed at outset. The fact that teachers use the referent (sentence) suggests children learn to understand this, and metalinguistic awareness of the term develops during repeated writing episodes. Further more, what the examples do not indicate is voice tone. Children speak specifically and carefully when articulating the sentence to be written, and surround and intersperse this with more free flowing, faster speech even when they try to extend an established sentence by lapsing into oral-like rather than text-like speech.

In summary, the analysis of lessons, time and content, indicated the comparatively small amount off time spent on writing in Reading Recovery lessons. The sections on text generation and text generation styles were essentially concerned with the preparation element of the writing episode. The next three sections, text construction, writing focus, and interactive

framework (presented in Chapter Eight), progressively focus analysis from the surface structure of the writing episode to the internal structure of interaction during the lesson.

7.5.4 Text Construction

Text construction is concerned with how words are written. Lesson transcripts from the full sample at Time A (n=17) and Time B (n=17) were analysed for responsibility of constructing a written word. Child, teacher and joint production categories for each word written were calculated for each observation (n=34). Child and teacher construction are those words written completely independently. Joint construction is that which is written either on the practice page using Elkonin boxes, or onto the writing page, but which is surrounded by talk as the child is guided to produce the word. The data were reduced to indicate mean word constructions at Time A and Time B, (Table 7.7). Extract 7.7 illustrates child, joint and teacher construction. Figure 7.4 shows the actual writing sample for the dialogue demonstrating joint construction of a word in Extract 7.7.

Extract 7.7 Child, teacher and joint word construction

Child construction

T: **Hasn't**
C: h
T: Let's try it up here
C: a s, isn't it?
T: OK. Write that in
C: h, a, s
T: Very good, **hasn't**

C: n, t [*writes*]

T: Very good. You wrote all of **hasn't** by yourself. Lovely. And there's an apostrophe in there.

(Child 6)

Joint construction

C: A b

T: bike

C: There's a K

T: Good you remembered that didn't you from looking at the word. Where do you think the K is? Push the counters in. Push the counters in.

C: **Bike** K

T: Good the K is on the end, and on the end of that, the very end, is the one we don't always hear

C: I was gonna put a T [*referring to letter formation of K*]

T: What's the one we don't always hear, which letter is that?

C: E

T: E good, after the K, 'cos that's the silent one.

C: A

T: **Bike**, what will it start with?

C: K

T: b **bike**

C: B

T: Good, yeah and this makes it say **bike** [*inserts I*]. OK copy it down and do the full stop.

(Child 5)

Teacher construction (There are no complete teacher written words as the child always gets at least one of the boundary sounds)

T: **Some**, what will that start with?

C: S

T: Put it in. Good. Sommme

C: U N

T: It sounds like a U, but it's an O and there is an M. Look this is N n naughty Nick. That's M like mum isn't it. And then the E the one we don't hear on the end again. [*T writes in*]

(Child 1)

Table 7.7 Mean number of words, child, joint and teacher constructed

	Time A mean number of words	Time B mean number of words
Child	2.65	6.76
Joint	3.12	3
Teacher	0.92	0
Mean sentence length	6.47*	10.16*

*Number of words

The mean number of words jointly constructed remained constant, while children's independently written words increased as did mean sentence length. There were few instances of teachers writing a word for a child and by the end of the programme (Time B) this did not occur at all.

There were two occasions in which a child initiated searching for a word which had been written on a previous occasion and this was then copied. In virtually each lesson in which joint construction occurred at Time A, Elkonin (sound analysis) boxes were used, whereas this occurred in only a

quarter of lessons at Time B. At time A more words were jointly constructed than written independently by the children. At Time B, double the amount of jointly constructed words were written independently by the children. Figure 7.4 shows the corresponding written text for the dialogue presented in Extract 7.7. for a jointly constructed word.

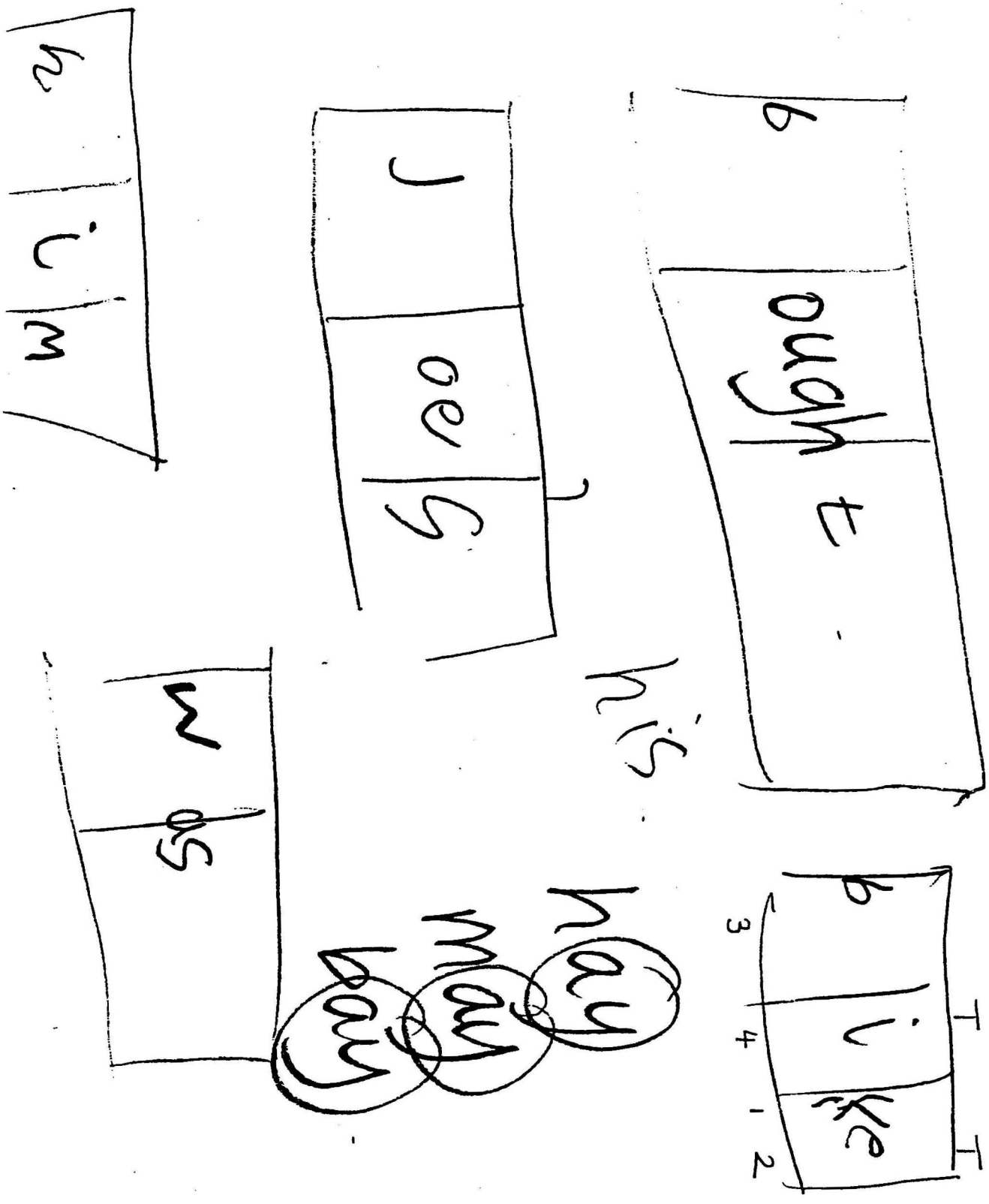

Figure 7.4 ***Writing sample for joint construction of the word 'bike'***

Figure 7.4 ***Writing sample for joint construction of the word 'bike'***

7.5.5 Writing Focus

The findings in this section pertain to the features teachers attend to during the transcription process. The Reading Recovery handbook discusses taking words to fluency (repeated writing of a word), hearing sounds in words (spelling) and a little on spatial layout. There is very little account of punctuation and handwriting. Teachers work together with children on strategies for writing.

All 75 observations were coded for content of writing focus. Categories were constructed from the data rather than using a pre-coded system. Categories were identified from teachers' verbal attention to features of writing. Each utterance was coded according to the teacher's focus. The main categories for focus of writing were handwriting, letter formation, punctuation, spacing and neat presentation. As spelling necessarily constitutes a large part of every text dialogue as teacher and child work on each word, this code is not included separately. The categories constructed highlight the prevalence of attention to transcriptional detail that occurs in the process of writing text. Punctuation, letter formation, spatial layout and neat presentation were four frequent categories that suggest children in Reading Recovery not only learn to compose and to spell but to produce legible, correctly formed and well-presented texts.

Table 7.8 shows the frequencies of the four categories identified at Time A and Time B. Analysis of the 49 sub-sample observations revealed ubiquitous reference to all these features.

Table 7.8 Number of times teachers focussed on surface features

Feature	Time A (n=17children)	Time B (n=17children)
handwriting/letter formation	11	4
punctuation	12	12
spacing	8	4
neat presentation	9	3

These are not single occurrences but counts for each observation in which the writing focus occurred, whether once or several times. It can be seen that focus on handwriting, spacing and neatness, i.e., presentation, was reduced by at least half at Time B. Punctuation remained a high profile teaching focus.

In order to document attention to the transcriptional aspects of writing, examples from each of the four categories are presented in Extract 7.8. To clarify how this occurs in interaction, the data has been divided into a) teaching and b) feedback for each category. These examples are placed in their context of the writing episode.

Extract 7.8 Categories for transcriptional features

Teaching - Handwriting

T: Oh dear what have we done wrong. I shouldn't have said that, I should have let you find out for yourself. What have you done wrong?

C: This way [*d for b*]

T: So what have we got to do?

C: Put a sticker on it.

T: I know that, but what are you going to do. Change it round to the other way hopefully. Just think that much more carefully which way round it goes. Now with the B, where are you going to start? Where do you start writing with the B? Oh dear, let's see how you write this letter properly. Hold your pen properly. Come on quickly 'cos we're running out of time. It's down up a bit and round. It's really important to get the letters starting in the right place. Alright....Mmm let's do a B like this starting up there. Down up around down stop. Start at the top. Practice your B down up around stop. And another one, down up around stop. B starts at the top.

(Child 4)

Feedback - Handwriting

T: Lovely and neat, good girl, nice sensible size...You're not quite putting big enough spaces. Lovely B, nicely written. You formed that beautifully, well done for remembering down back up and round the front. Full stop. Read your story now.

(Child 15)

Teaching - Punctuation

T: Right, before you start, do you know what kind of letter we use to start a sentence?

C: D

T: No, I don't think we've talked about this before but when we start a

sentence the beginning of the sentence the very first letter has to be a capital letter. That's the beginning of a sentence and also where else do we use a capital letter? ( ) A name? When you write your name you use a capital letter don't you. You write a capital J. So when we start the sentence shall we see if we can start in the grown up way with a big letter every time you start? [*T and C discuss first letter and practice it in capital form*]. Yeh, um not as big as that. It doesn't have to be big. The letter is called big because it's a different sort of letter but you don't have to make it big. [*T and C continue to write the next word*]

C: Capital?

T: No, no, no. You don't have capitals in the middle. We're only going to do the capitals at the very beginning. At the beginning of the sentence, a capital letter and what's at the end of the sentence, what tells us that it's finished?

C: Full stop

T: Right, so capital letter at the beginning, full stop at the end.

(Child 5)

Teaching - Punctuation and Teaching - Spacing

(Figure 7.5, p. 245, shows a copy of the writing to accompany this dialogue.)

T: Good. Is that it? What do you do when you've finished?

C: ( ) You read it.

T: You read it but you need something to say you've finished the sentence.

C: Oh

T: What is it

C: Um, question mark

T: **I like mummy coming in** isn't a question. It's the end of a sentence. We put a full stop which is just a dot at the end. Good girl. Question marks do come at the end of sentences, you're right, but that's not a question. Right can you read me that?

C: **I like mummy coming in.**

T: That's brilliant writing. Why have you written **I like**, then you've put **mummy** here, then you've written a word underneath. Usually when we write we write in long lines like this. **I like mummy coming in**. OK, and it's only when we run out of space that we start again over here.

C: Oh

T: So can you remember that tomorrow. You're going to go right across the page, and I'll remind you that's something you've got to think about. Go right across the page and when you run out of space start a new line.

(Child 6)

Feedback - Punctuation

T: ...right, now that's the end of the sentence, that sentence, what do we put on the end? [*child tacitly puts full stop*] Right....good, an **I**, but which one, small or capital?

C: capital

T: Why are we doing a capital?

C: Sh, it's um got a full stop

T: Right OK. Can you write it. Uh is that a capital? Show me a capital I here. That's it, go over the top then. Good boy....right OK that's fine, but don't use a big D 'cos it's in the middle of this, it's going to be in the middle of this word isn't it? Did you forget how to do the little D? Where is it then? Right can you do that one then, good boy....right, now the reason we have full stops and capital letters is so don't have to keep saying and and and. Don't you think it'd be boring if it was **and and and** all the time?

(Child 14)

Feedback - Spacing and Feedback - Neat Presentation

T: What's this idea here of putting a pen top between the words? No, I'm not saying it's wrong. At least its reminding you to leave a finger space isn't it. And you're writing's very very neat. Good boy!

(Child 3)

Teaching - Neat Presentation

T: Nice and neat. Let's get it quicker too. Now, you've gone right the way down. You could have kept it all on the same line. I know I said you were squashed, but it looks even worse if you put it down again. All different levels.

(Child 17)

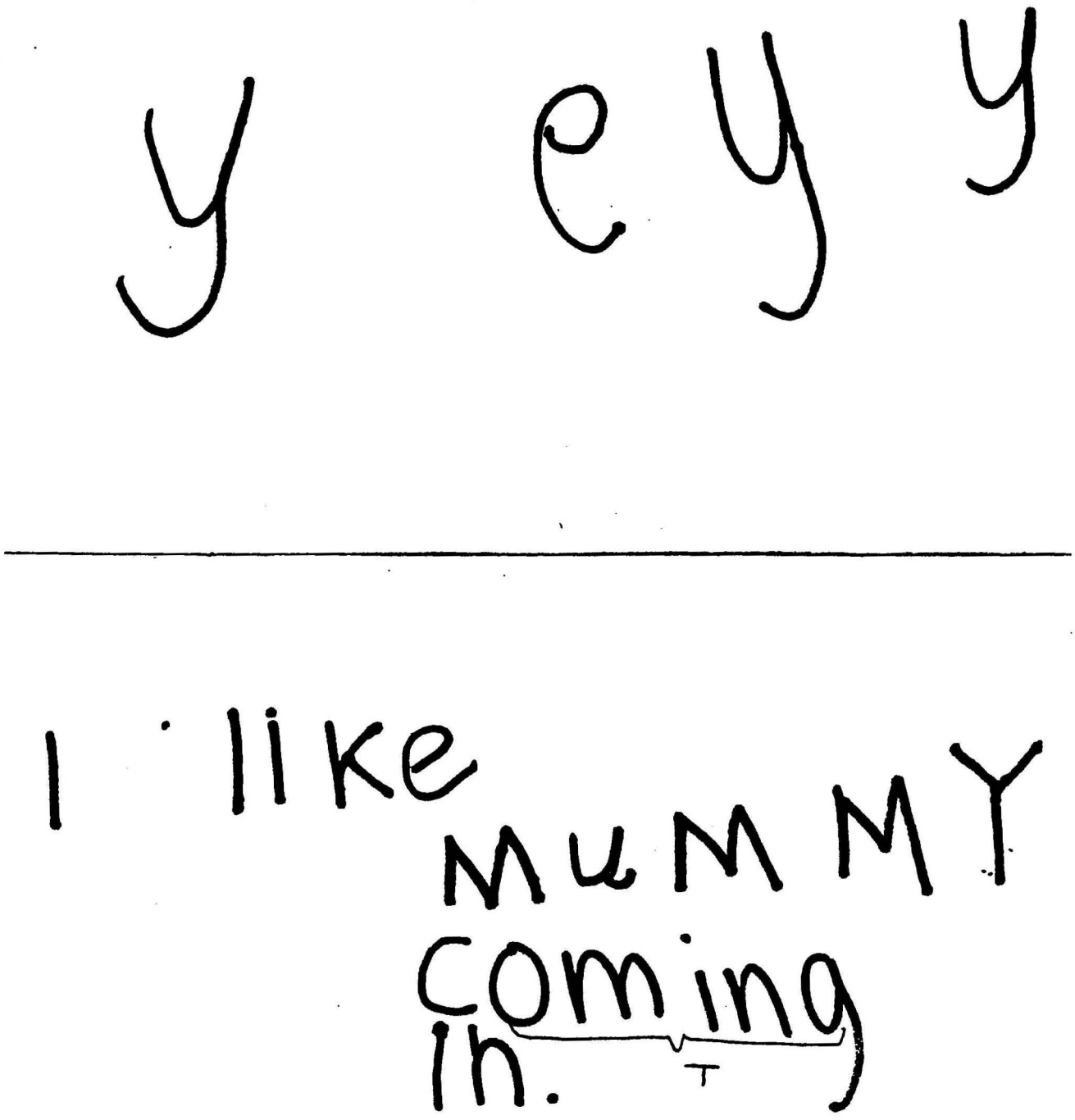

Figure 7.5 ***Writing sample to illustrate teaching for spacing***

There are many occurrences of these four categories and frequently they co-exist. The prevalence of these features as writing foci are encompassed briefly in the following short excerpts shown in Extract 7.9. While the children often appear tacit, there are also incidents of child initiation and verbalisation of activity. The following interactive chunks are examples from most of the participants.

Extract 7.9 Brief examples of categories for transcriptional features

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Punctuation

C: Shall I start with a capital?

T: No.

T: Right put the M down. Now it's a name, so you can do a big M like this. Good, and we've got A and Y on the end. Do that and full stop on the end.

T: The E on the end. Right put the full stop on.

C: I've got two full stops.

T: Just put a full stop, 'cos that's the end of your first sentence.

T: Let's try the other D. You don't put a capital D on the end like that.

T: Look at the D. Why don't I like the D

C: 'cos it's a um capital

T: And do you have a capital like that

C: No

T: No you don't need a capital there.

T: OK. Capital, and I want a big space

C: Capital N?

T: No, capital I. Why do you need a capital I?

C: 'cos it's the beginning.

T: Make it nice and neat. I don't like that L in there. Do you know why I don't like that one?

C: Why?

T: Because it doesn't need to be a big one. what should it be? A little one like that. OK You don't need a big one unless it's at the start. Don't worry about joining the letters up. Just make it nice and neat.

T: Write it. What about a finger space?...

C: **The cat said come back**. There's a full stop.

T: Right OK.

C: Can I put a full stop?

T: Yeh. It's gone down a hill a bit that hasn't it?

T: Right, copy it down. Full stop. I shouldn't have to tell you that any more.

C: Exclamation mark

T: Exclamation mark. righto! [*child laughs*]

Spacing

T: I like your spacing, it's really clear to read.

T: Right, what about these finger spaces? Come on, look this is all squashed up here.

T: Right you can leave a bigger space, you can't use your finger there can you? Use your other hand, just imagine a bigger space 'cos if it's all joined up we can't read it.

T: You copy that down quickly after you leave a space...that's it you can write on really quickly. You show me. Nice and neat.

T: Right put it on the next line 'cos you won't squeeze **book** in there will you.

T: Does that make sense, **My mum good sewing**? Check it again, you're missing out one word 'cos you didn't put a big space between it. ...So that's why we need to have spaces 'cos you were reading that all as one word weren't you?

T: I like how quickly you did that. And what else do I like about how you're done that?

C: Full stop

T: The full stop's in the right place. What else?

C: Spaces

T: Spaces, and did I have to tell you?

C: No

T: You're not quite putting big enough spaces....Lovely B, nicely written. Full stop. Read your story now.

T: You're writing's a bit jumbled up today. You could've left a bigger space there.

Handwriting

T: Do you know the right way to do the D?

T: Is that a D? Why do you think you did that? Shall I tell you why?

C: Why

T: Because you started in the wrong place...Try and keep the writing straight. That's it. Make the letters nice.

Neat Presentation

T: You're gonna write a long one today and you're gonna make your writing nice and neat....No, I want it neat. I'm serious. We're going to have to write it again. You're getting a bit sloppy....Oh, that's much neater, good girl.

T: And, leave a space. I don't know why you've put a full stop there because we haven't finished yet....Why is your writing going down hill? Try and keep in one straight line. Let's see your best handwriting.

This evidence suggests that Reading Recovery teachers implicitly attend to transcriptional competencies by taking every opportunity to instruct, support or give feedback. Thus in practice, much attention is given to features which receive little attention in the Reading Recovery guidelines. Furthermore, teaching of these features occurs simultaneously with producing connected text. All children achieved good spatial awareness and were able to use punctuation independently by the end of their time in Reading Recovery. Figures 7.6a, 7.6b and 7.6c illustrate writing at the beginning, middle and end of one child's Reading Recovery programme.

Figure 7.6a Writing sample - beginning of programme

Figure 7.6b Writing sample - middle of programme

I went to the post office
and heard to put
the letters in a bag.

h	e	l	p	ed

p	u	t	

Figure 7.6c Writing sample - end of programme

CHAPTER EIGHT

THE WRITING EPISODE: TEACHING STRATEGIES

Reading Recovery Writing Episode: The Internal Structure of the Lesson

The analysis and discussion presented in this chapter are a continuation of the findings presented in Chapter Seven.

8.1 Interactive Framework: Findings

8.1.1 Procedure

All beginning and end of programme observations were coded. All sub-sample transcripts (n=49) were coded to analyse the changes in interaction and the course of the programme. For the purposes of this analysis, the 49 sub-sample transcripts were used to test structures derived from analysis of beginning and end of programme (Time A and Time B) lesson observations from all 17 children. The large number of observations carried our total provided the initial basis for identification of patterns of interaction.

8.1.2 Analysis

Analysis was conducted by scrutinising teacher-child moves in relation to each other, rather than isolated accounts of initiating and responding, and in relation to the written text being constructed. Thus a dialogic

interchange rather than individual utterances functioned as the unit of analysis.

The procedures for analysis are outlined here and presented in detail in the appropriate sections of the findings.

- Categories of teacher utterances were constructed from the data and classified as teacher talk.
- The structure of interaction was coded by identifying sequences of teacher and child utterances. The interactive pattern was defined as talk cycles.
- Movement between talk cycles was categorised by types of teacher 'leads' and occurrences of child 'leads'. Leads are the utterances that make the transition to the next sequence of talk.
- The patterns of talk cycles were examined for changes in interaction over time.
- Finally, interaction was scrutinised for indicators of scaffolded learning.

8.2 Teacher Talk Categories

Reading Recovery is a specialist programme requiring highly trained teachers. The purpose of analysing the content of teacher utterances was to document the range of these in this specific context. Types of teacher utterances were identified in each of the lesson observations Time A and Time B. Seven categories were constructed from the data. These were then applied to the 49 sub-sample observation transcripts and were found to be consistent throughout. All teacher utterances could be coded according to these categories and no further ones were necessary.

Three types of utterance, Instructive, Responsive/Confirmative and Questioning, correspond to the norms of teacher talk identified by many researchers. The remaining four categories, indicate utterances which must occur in teaching and learning interaction but are rarely specified. These have been classified as Commentary, Directive, Action and Management Talk. Salient excerpts from the data are cited to explicate each category. They also show the likelihood of occurrence at different points of the writing episode.

8.2.1 Commentary Talk

This category includes several functions. It identifies the conversational aspect of interaction, and usually occurs at the beginning or end of the writing episode. Extract 8.1 illustrates this.

Extract 8.1 Examples of Commentary Talk

T: You go shopping on a Sunday? My goodness me you do lots of shopping. [*generating a sentence based on text On Friday Something Funny Happened*]

(Child 1)

T: He couldn't blow it down could he? Did you think that might happen? I did 'cos I know this story, it'a a very old story. They used to have that story when I was a little girl. Right OK. Let's write that in two sentences then.

(Child 5)

T: Yeh OK. Instead of saying Wilf and Wilma, Biff and Chip, 'cos that' quite long isn't it. Shall we say **the children. The children went to school.** And what did they do when they were at school?

C: They played

T: They played? What did they make then? Make a

C: Made a rocket

T: Did they?

C: Yeh [*points to picture*]

T: Oh, looks like a rocket, but I don't know if it is one.

(Child 4)

T: It says **where**. Sit down. Did you have too many doughnuts at playtime?

C: I had two

T: Two!

C: I mean one big one. I had, it might have made me funny I am hyperactive.

T: Are you and you had lots of doughnut sugar. So did I, so you'd better watch out.

C: Aargh, we're as bad as each other!

T: That's a short story. It's a good story. **I had a doughnut.**

(Child 6)

This category also includes utterances which act as a link or verbalisation of the observable task undertaken. That is, comments which simply hold the act together as shown in these short examples from three teachers.

T: Right, **today**, we're running out of space aren't we?

T: Right, **the bad wolf**, I'm not gonna put that one in boxes.

T: **Was**, now that's the word you wrote the night before last, do you remember? You wrote it on the board for went. Got mixed up....We'll work out what goes there in a minute.

Commentary talk also serves to qualify directives. Looking closely at the data reveals directives often have explanatory comments rather than just a request to execute an act.

T: Right, **snow,** we'll do in boxes. Let's push the counters in first, then you'll hear the sounds better.

(Child 7)

8.2.2 Management Talk

Maintaining children's focus and keeping children on task is an issue in any teaching and learning activity. Utterances in this category were usually concerned with some physical aspect of the context and was often embedded in directive talk as illustrated in Extract 8.2 from four teachers in the sample.

Extract 8.2 Examples of Management Talk

T: Where's your chair. Sit down properly...no wiggling about. Quickly, write I...sit still please.

T: Right, quickly, you should have got started by now. I, you can do, I. Hurry up. Well, that's not a very nice I is it. Look, will you sit on your chair properly please. Pull your chair in. Hold your pen properly.

T: ...look, if you had your hand on the paper you'd be able to write better, but you've got your elbow leaning over there, you can't see what you're writing. That's two mistakes you've made so far.

T: ...come on concentrate on what you're doing and hold that paper when you're writing. It's better to be writing like that you've got more control. Sit straight.

8.2.3 Directive Talk

This classifies directives to children usually requesting a specific response to write, read or verbalise an action. Directives can be disguised as

questions but are in fact statements. Directive utterances are frequent and usually occur at the beginning and end of talk cycles surrounding each word constructed by teacher, child or teacher and child (see 8.3, Patterns of Interaction). Extract 8.3 presents short excerpts of teacher utterances from across the sub-sample.

Extract 8.3 Examples of Directive Talk

Tell me your story again.
Write **my** up there.
Copy it down quickly
Read what you've done so far.
Say the whole word to me.
Write it down underneath, just there.
I want you to make some words out of that with your pen.
Can you say it again please?
Do you want to copy it down there quickly?
Write that down then straight away. If you know the word just put it in quickly.
A little bit faster with your pushing. **Round**. And one more time. Now you say it and I'll push.
What do you do now? [*indirect directive*]
Put the top on your pen, and put it away and read it through to me.

This category then, encompasses features which have also been classified in the literature as prompts or acts for strategies.

8.2.4 Action Talk

This category corresponds to instructive talk but with the added dimension of the teacher being in the process of doing something for the child. While the teacher writes, she articulates what she is doing and why, without

specifically instructing the child. They are incidental utterances, but also indicate implicit teaching. Extract 8.4 illustrates this. Action utterances were found to occur during the joint construction of writing words. This in turn is usually the centre of a talk cycle (see 8.3.2). Action utterances rarely occurred in the weeks near the end of the children's programmes.

Extract 8.4 Examples of Action Talk

T: Right and the middle is this. [*T writes*] Makes it say **move**. What's that letter?

C: O

(Child 7)

T: Right this is the hard bit. **Saturday**. [*Writes u r without articulating the letters*]

(Child 1)

T: **Aunty**. This is another funny word. This word starts like this although it doesn't sound like it. **Aunty**. [*Writes a u without articulating the letters. Child gets n*]. Yeh, N and then T and there's a Y [*Teacher writes*]

(Child 1)

T: ...good, and we've got A and Y on the end. Do that and full stop on the end.

(Child 5)

T: Well it's quite hard. Its'a C and here, C and H and then two Os [*Teacher writes*]. You don't hear that sound do you, but, right.

(Child 8)

T: What else? **Doughnut**'s a tricky word 'cos look what's on the rest of **doughnut**. I'll show you. Can you hear the G H?

(Child 6)

C: **Bought**. Has it got a T?

T: I'll show you what's in the rest of it. [*teacher writes without articulating letters*]

C: er

T: Can't really hear those can you? No ( ).

(Child 7)

The remaining three categories incorporate utterances most often classified in published classroom interaction studies.

8.2.5 Instructive Talk

This category includes teacher talk which informs children about print by imparting knowledge or teaching a strategy. It is direct talk and occurs in joint production of words as shown in Extract 8.5.

Extract 8.5 Examples of Instructive Talk

T: ...No, it's got an I in there. You can't really hear it that well. **Said**'s one of those words that you have to remember.

(Child 6)

T: Great, that's **dog**. I wonder how we can make it into **doggy**. Hang on

C: I know, E

T: Not and E, we need another G first and when we have an E sound at the end of a word we don't have a E what do we have instead, **doggy** ( )

C: E

T: It could be but it it's not, so what else

C: U

T: Could, it's not a U. Show me what you mean by a U. That's a Y isn't it, not a U. **I love my doggy**.

(Child 6)

T: ...Now **helped**, that's the ending part isn't it. Like jumped, walked. It sounds like a T but it's ED together.

(Child 1)

T: ..O W together say in this case ow, **flowers**...

(Child 1)

T: What did you hear at the beginning sh, did you hear that, sh

C: An S

T: S and H together say sh

C: S and a

T: H, yeah, in the same box, 'cos they make that sound.

(Child 15)

T: ...Right now do you remember we talked about letters ending the same for example, going, walking. Do you remember what those letters were at the end? I N G Look these all end the same, walking, um running...

(Child 4)

T: [*establishes by word comparison ing ending*] Right, now What does **going** end with?

C: I N G

T: Right, do you think colouring will end the same? Right. That's how you get there, by thinking about something you do know and try to correct it, colouring, going, same pattern eh?

(Child 5)

T: I'll explain this another time but this E makes that say A and not a. Alright. When you get an E on the end sometimes it says its name rather than the sound.

(Child 18)

T: It's the other one, it's not S, what else can make s sometimes?

C: C

T: Yeh, it's quite funny **necklace** 'cos it's got c C and s C. Silent letter on the end.

(Child 7)

T: It is quite tricky to know when you can't hear what might come on the end. And for **bell** it's just two Ls.

(Child 6)

T: ...what about this word says **write**. I want you to write, **writing**. It's actually, we cross off the E there, there's no E, There should be an E if it's write, but if we're doing writing, we won't need the E...

(Child 11)

T: It does sound like an I, but in my it's a Y, like that. You've got to remember for **my** it's a Y...

(Child 11)

8.2.6 Responsive/Confirmative Talk

This is the traditionally defined feedback. In this context however, the data indicate that this category is not part of a specific tripartite initiate/ respond/ feedback structure. There is much use of instructive or directive utterances within which responsive talk may be embedded. It appears 'delayed' rather than immediate as teachers are constantly seeking for verbal or written actions from the children. Thus, it may occur after several exchanges as well as immediately after a response as illustrated from eight dyads in the sample in Extract 8.6.

Extract 8.6 Examples of Responsive Talk

T: I like the way you read that to find out where you were up to.

T: ...see how much you can write. Good girl. You remembered the capital letter. Well done. ( ) **The princess cut**, that's nice writing. Keep it straight.

T: Good, put it in the first box. Good boy.

T: Oh, I'm glad, I liked how quickly you worked that one out.

C: How do you spell P? Is that a P?

T: That's it.

C: I got most of them right.

T: You did you were very good. very good. You did very well to remember that. Good girl

C: Long words [*means sentence*]

T: It is long isn't it, but you wrote it very quickly.

C: You had to put the Es in.

T: That's right

C: You never get the fun bits!

8.2.7 Question Talk

This category contains only genuine questions and not inverted demands. Three purposes for question utterances were identified from the data. One pertains to the common type of display question which seeks to confirm the child's knowledge by eliciting an act or verbal response. The second purpose is to clarify children's understandings; similar to the first but requiring the child to think for themselves. These are the questions children should monitor independently as they become able to self-regulate. The third purpose is diagnostic; a genuine request in order for the child to demonstrate her understanding to the teacher. Extract 8.7. illustrates each of these purposes.

Extract 8.7 Examples of Question Talk

Purpose i)

T: **Birthday**, that's a long word isn't it?

C: b

T: What's it start with?

C: b B

(Child 5)

T: Good, what's d, which letter?

C: D

(Child 13)

T: **Jumping**

C: Oh, yeah, I L G

T: What's that letter? [*points to N, child named L*]

C: L ( ) M, N!

(Child 17)

T: Where can you hear the p? [*child inserts tacit*]

(Child 11)

Purpose ii)

T: **Harvest**, did you hear something on the end?

C: t T

(Child 1)

T: That says go. How can you make it into **got**? What do you need on the end?

C: ( ) t

(Child 9)

T: Where did you hear the E? I'll show you where.

(Child 14)

T: What can you hear? Write **my** up here, **my**. What's on the end of **my**? What letter's that?

C: U

T: It's a Y

(Child 13)

Purpose iii)

T: Do you know what makes f? [*child writes f*] [*request to demonstrate if knows corresponding graphic*]

T: **Tree**
C: E, E [*writes ee in*]
T: Did you know there was two Es?
C: Yes
T: Good on you

(Child 6)

T: OK. Try **snow** up here.
C: s n ( )
T: ooh, **snow** ( )
C: Has it got a W in?
T: Very good, W at the end. How did you know it had a W in? Could you hear it?
C: No, 'cos I um I already knowed how to spell it.
T: Oh that's great, OK, copy that down then
C: 'cos I go skiing every year.
T: Oh right, so you see snow. That's very good to remember it.

(Child 7)

T: Do you know **with**? Let's see what's on the end of **with**. Oh, very good. I didn't know you knew **with**. (Child 8)

C: **Has** [*wrote has instead of sad in word comparison with had*]
T: **Has**, lovely, and if I do, do this, do you know what that word says?
C: **sad**
T: Great. **I had.**

(Child 16)

T: **Today** is all one word **today**
C: d A [*writes as articulates, writes y silently*]
T: How did you know there was a Y on the end of day? Could you remember that? (Child 6)

These categories of teacher utterances identified at Time A and Time B and applied to the sub-sample data are obviously extrapolated parts of broader contexts. The findings here have demonstrated teacher utterances that exist in Reading Recovery writing episodes and at which points of the episode they occurred. As the focus for subsequent analysis is the interchange between child and teacher and the structure of that interchange, it is not expedient to count occurrences of these categories. The next section of findings focuses on the interactive structure in which all the categories of utterances are embedded.

8.3 Patterns of Interaction

This section identifies the interactive structure called a talk cycle, and factors which propel the talk cycle forward.

8.3.1 Structure

The structure of interaction has been implicitly demonstrated by the previous extracts. The dyadic context and specific on-task nature of the literacy event, suggest that this structure conforms to that identified for classroom talk (as discussed in Chapter Four), i.e., teacher instructs, requests or models, child responds verbally or by executing an act, teacher feeds back or gives further instructions. It is not necessary to illustrate this aspect of the interaction as it is shown clearly by Extracts 8.1 to 8.7. Taking the dialogic interchange as the unit of analysis, the observations yielded specific patterns which involve larger chunks of text (i.e. talk and written text) and which constitute the structure of talk in every writing episode. These are termed talk cycles. The teacher/child/teacher interactive pattern is located within these talk cycles.

8.3.2 Talk Cycles

Talk cycles of several teacher-child interchanges comprise the structure of the writing episode. The initial cycles centre around sentence generation. Once the sentence is generated and established, cycles of teacher-child exchanges centre on word construction. As it is not the words themselves, but the nature of the talk surrounding word construction that is pertinent, the exchanges are referred to as talk cycles rather than word cycles. A talk cycle is defined by the boundaries of interaction focussing on each word to be written. Each talk cycle therefore can be identified as the series of exchanges between child and teacher as each word is constructed. The interactive structure of a talk cycle is as follows. Each word to be written is identified; the teacher and child interact around the written production of the word; teacher (usually) initiates the move to the next word; the teacher and child become focussed again centred around that word until completion, and then they move on again through talk. This model of focus, move, focus, move continues throughout the episode and throughout the programme. Figure 8.1 shows a diagrammatic model of talk cycles.

The 'size' or length of the focus part is dependent on the child's current state of knowledge in relation to word complexity, which may affect how long it takes to construct the word. Dialogue from every episode could illustrate this pattern, but Extract 8.8 exemplifies the beginning, end and beginning of a new cycle.

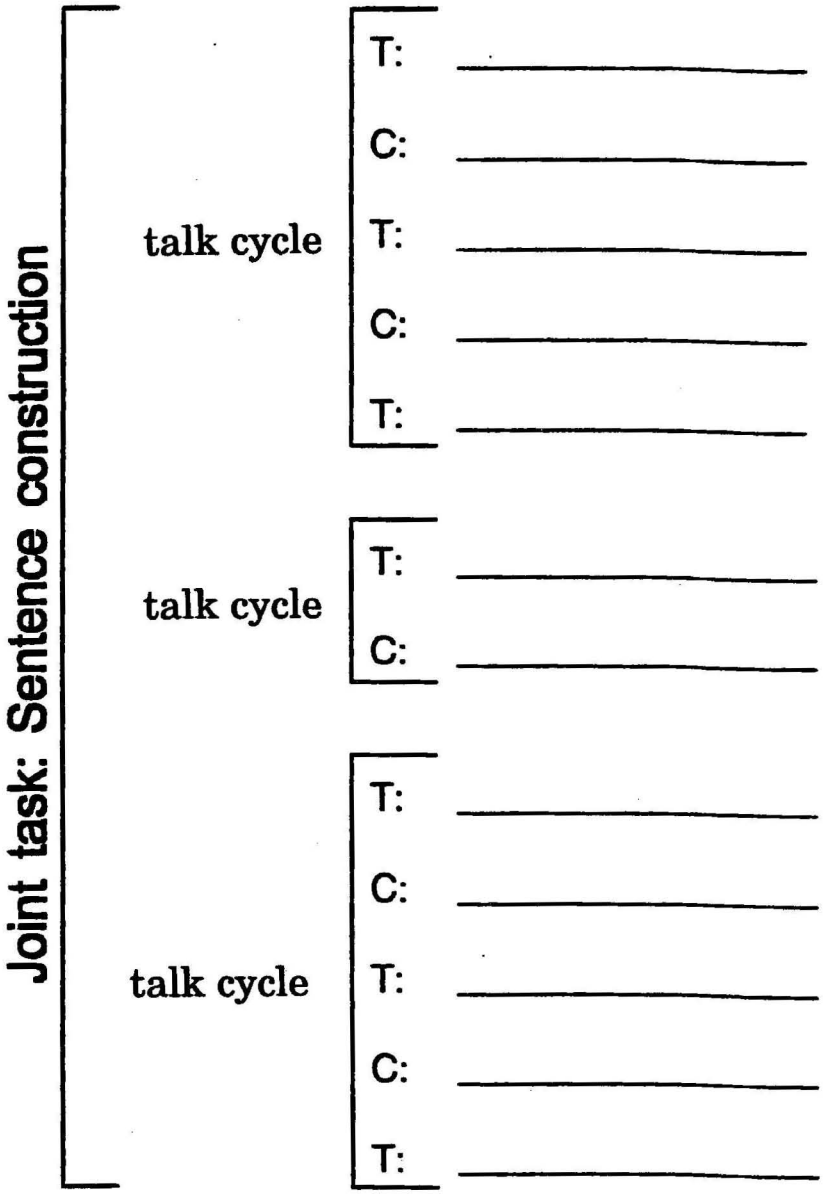

Figure 8.1 Model of Talk Cycle

Extract 8.8 Example of Talk Cycle

T: Right, **school**, what will that start with? [*T initiates move out of previous cycle, by stating word to be written*]

C: **School** [*says to self*] That start with C?

T: What **school**? Not quite. You're nearly there. It has got those two letters in it, but it starts with?

C: S

T: Good, put the S in. Then there's C H. I think you remember what **school** looks like, **schoool**

C: O

T: Two O's actually. Mmm and what are we going to put on the end? **School**

C: **School**

T: **School** [*emphasises end of word*]

C: L

T: Right, what have we got so far? Read it, read the words. [*T initiates end of cycle by telling C to re-read*]

C: **The children went to school**

T: **And**, leave a space. [*T leads next cycle by stating word to be written]*

(Child 5)

8.3.3 Interactive sub-cycles

The talk cycle also incorporates interactive diversions or sub-cycles. These are the points at which teachers diverge from the task at hand to focus on other elements of writing. These are usually word comparisons, practising onset and rimes, 'taking a word to fluency' and discussions of transcriptional features. The teacher then leads the child back to the main cycle, either to complete a word or move onto the next one. Annotated examples in Extract 8.9 illustrate this pattern.

Extract 8.9 Examples of interactive diversions within a talk cycle

Example 1: identify rime

[*C writes d a for day*]

T: And there's on the end like that, **Saturday**. [*T puts y*] Lots of words end like that, well Monday Tuesday all those but can you think of something that sounds like day?

C: day

T: day

C: da

T: Change the D and put another letter, p'raps, pay. Does that sound like /day?/

C: /bay/

T: Bay, good. So let's write these down.

C: Hay

T: Good girl, hay

C: Way

T: Way, well done, they all end the same don't they? Think of some tonight perhaps you can think of some more, alright. **On Saturday**, what are you going to write? [*T re-reads sentence and asks question to bring back to current focus and begin next word cycle*]

C: Bay

T: Yeh well shall we go onto the sentence. That's lovely, tonight you can think of some more words that end like that OK. **On Saturday**.

(Child 1)

Example 2: word comparison for centre sound and spelling

T: I think you know **house** don't you? [*beginning of cycle*] Oh you've done an A

C: O

T: Yeah. what else? Have a think

C: S

T: Yeh, there's something before the s, can you remember what it was? ( ) Leave a space and I'll put it in. What's the letter on the end?

C: E ( )

T: **House**, [*writes OU in. Instead of moving onto next word here, the T digresses*] Can you think of another word that sounds like house?

C: Mouse

T: Mouse OK. That's a great one [*writes mouse*]. See mouse has got that in it too. O, U. House, mouse.

C: Couse, is that a word?

T: No, but you know what I mean so that ou sound is made by O U. Right, read your sentence [*T relocates back to original*]

(Child 7)

Example 3: taking a word to fluency

T: ...write that up there quickly, **my**. what does it say?

C: **my**

T: OK then, now do **my** again. ooh tiny.

C: **my**

T: Now an in between one. Nice and quick. What does it say?

C: **my**

T: Very good. Quickly read your sentence. What's next?

(Child 10)

Example 4: identify and practice word endings

T: **Sewing**. It sounds like O S O, you'd think it was just an O there wouldn't you. [*writes E W*] How do we get ing on the end of a word. What's the letters?

C: ing i n

T: OK. Write that in. What else might we need, **sewing**.

C: W

T: There's the w, what, on the end?

C: s, i

T: I

C: N

T: G **sewing**. [*Instead of moving onto next word cycle here, takes this further*] If I had play, how could I make it into playing?

C: E /i/ [*corrects self*]

T: /I/ N G

C: G

T: Playing. What's another one that end like that, playing. How about jump?

C: Jumper

T: Make it into jumping for me. Good. what else, good. OK I'm going to write go now. I want you to make it into going. [*C writes*] What does it say?

C: Going

T: OK, copy down **sewing**. [*T relocates to task with directive*]

(Child 6)

Example 5: Child initiates diversion on orthographics of a word

C: [*Writes **tomorrow** in Elkonin boxes*]

T: Ok Great, no you've done it well, but I should have stopped you because in here, there's to like that tom and there's two Rs and on the end there's a W. So you got a lot of it right.

C: [*before T can move on*]1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 [*counts letters in Elkonin boxes*] 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 [*counts letters in teacher's script*] How comes that's shorter?

T: 'cos you spread it out in boxes don't you, that's why?

C: Shall I put it in my book [*C initiates lead back to cycle*]

T: What do you think?

(Child 7)

Thus, interactive diversions occur within the talk cycles which involve teacher and child interacting around word construction. A model of a sequence of talk cycles (Figure 8.1) could be extended to incorporate these diversions. Their occurrence is highly individualised to each child's programme.

Teacher-child exchanges vary as the teacher responds to the child's extending capabilities. The teachers' patterns of response do not remain static. Diversions are instigated based on critical observation and decision making as the teacher's help frame an understanding of how print is organised and support the child's approximations on several levels of operating on text. The examples illustrate that within the talk cycle, teachers model and support learning at sentence level, word level, and intra-word level. Assisted performance and increasing challenge at these various levels of attention to print achieve independent child action, as shown later in the analysis of interaction over time analysed in 8.3.5.

8.3.4 Teacher and Child Moves

Analysis of the ending of a talk cycle and the beginning of another, i.e., the move (the utterance that makes the transition into the next cycle), revealed findings as to factors which govern the transition into and out of each cycle. A lead is the closing utterance of one cycle which moves the interaction onto focussing on the next word of the text to be written. There are several different ways in which teachers lead and these types of teacher leading were classified from the data. They are outlined in Table 8.1. The most prevalent factor determining teacher leading style was anticipation of word complexity for that particular child at that point in the programme. The findings also showed that a child only leads or initiates the move into the next cycle when she or he has written the previous word independently. (However, children did not always lead if they had written the previous word independently, but this was the only condition when child leads did occur.) This is an indication of children beginning to take over the teacher's modelled strategy and this finding was omnipresent throughout the sub-sample data.

Eight types of teacher leads were identified at Time A, of which five occurred at Time B. One further type was identified from the sub-sample observations over time. Table 8.1 shows frequencies for types of teacher leads. Similar types are shown consecutively.

It can be seen that the predominant teacher strategy, by a large margin, for leading the move onto the next word cycle is telling, followed by re-reading the text thus far and telling the next word, and re-reading the text as a prompt to move on. The other leads, which occur less often, are concerned with specifically directing the child to monitor the sentence construction, such as a prompt for the child to re-read, a contextual question to focus on what is being written or a restatement of the whole text.

Table 8.1 ***Frequency of teacher leads at beginning and end of programmes and in total***

Type of Teacher Lead	Time A (n=4 children)	Time B (n=4 children)	Total (n=49episodes)
re-reads sentence	2	4	33
tells next word	7	12	76
re-reads sentence and tells next word	1	5	36
re-reads last word written	1	4	11
re-reads last word and tells next word	0	0	18
re-reads sentence and asks question	2	2	8
reminds whole sentence	2	0	11
question/prompt child to re-read	1	0	10
Contextual question to establish next word	1	0	11
Total	17 leads	27 leads	

The data suggests that teachers can misjudge and may override a child's attempt at independence, as shown in Extract 8.10; but this was not a common finding.

Extract 8.10 Teaching interventions within a talk cycle

T: **It was Joe's** [*T leads cycle by re-reading and stating next word*]

C: **Joe's**

T: What will that start with, **Joe's, Joe's**? [*draws boxes*]

C: I know how to spell **Joe**

T: Go on then, what's it start with, put the first one.

C: J O /E/ [*C ignores and articulates whole word*]

T: /OK/ Put the J in. O E together 'cos they make the same sound. [*C had used visual memory, not sound analysis, T retained boxes and overrode child's initiation to write independently by asking again only to put in first letter*]

(Child 5)

Child leads, as has been mentioned, occurred after they had written the previous word independently; whether the move into that word was teacher or child led was not significant. On no other occasions did a child lead the transition. Children initiated the move either by spontaneously generating the next word, re-reading the text thus far and saying the next word to be written, re-reading the last word written and re-reading the last word written and saying the next word. (Note: towards the end of the programme, in Phase 3 to be discussed, the child moved on independently but silently, such that there is no verbal marking of the move to the next word.) Frequencies for child leads at Time A and Time B from the four sub-sample children are compared with frequencies for teacher leads in Table 8.2.

There are more occurrences of teacher and child leads at Time B because sentences generated by the end of the programme are longer, and there are

often two sentences. While the teacher usually told the child the next word, children leading the transitions always used a re-reading strategy and never just said the next word. The children had internalised the teacher's other modelled strategies of re-reading to locate the next word and to monitor their own writing.

Table 8.2 ***Frequencies of teacher and child leads at beginning and end of programmes***

Type of lead	Time A (n=4 children)		Time B (n=4 children)	
	Teacher	Child	Teacher	Child
re-reads sentence	2	1	4	1
tells next word	7	0	12	0
re-reads sentence and tells next word	1	0	5	7
re-reads last word	1	0	4	2
re-reads last word and says next word	0	0	0	3
Total	11	1	25	13

Truncated excerpts of dialogue do not give a full representation, but Extract 8.11 shows annotated examples of child leads.

Extract 8.11 Examples of child leads

T: **I wish** [*T leads by re-reading so far*]

C: **I** [*C writes independently*] **had** ( )[*C says next word to be written as wrote **I** independently.*]

T: [*C writes **had** independently*] Do you know what goes in there?

C: d d

T: Do you know the right way to do the d? ( ) [*C completes **had***]

C: **a** [*C leads to next word as wrote **had** independently*] **monkey** [*C leads to next word as wrote **a***]

T: Let's try **monkey** up here. [*T takes over* cycle *by anticipating word complexity, but it was the child who initiated the move as had written previous words independently*]

(Child 7)

C: **My mum is good at** at a, t [*C starts to write*]

T: When I asked you to write at on the board this morning you wrote it very quickly. See if you can do it now without sounding it out. [*C writes **at***]

C: **My mum is good at sewing**, s O ing [*C leads move by re-reading text and generating the next word, as she wrote **at** independently*]

(Child 6)

T: OK **It is my sisters birthday soon** [*T leads move by re-reading text*]

C: **And** [*C writes **and** independently so leads to next word*] **I**

T: [*C writes **I**, and could have led the move, but T anticipates word complexity*] **Bought**, is a tricky word...

(Child 7)

Having described the structure of interaction in the writing episode in terms of constituent talk cycles, the next section presents findings for interaction over time.

8.3.5 Interaction over time

Based on talk cycles established as a unit of analysis, each of the four sub-sample transcripts (n=49) was examined independently in order to explore changes in the interactive pattern during the course of their programme. Three phases of scaffolded activity were found to be present in all four cases. The phases were constructed from the data by examining teacher and child leads within the talk cycles. The interactive structures identified are presented in Figure 8.2 by outlining the three phases and their critical features.

Phase 1 Close monitoring and intervention

Features:
- heavily dominated by teacher leads
- child verbalises letters before writing in order to check or confirm with teacher

Phase 2 Teacher acts as prompt or 'memory amplifier'

Features:
- child can identify need but requires help to achieve child makes overt connections of knowledge
- child verbalises letters while writing
- child begins to operate teacher modelled strategies

Phase 3 Teacher is essentially reactive

Features:
- child acts more, vocalises less
- evidence child has internalised teacher prompts
- child writes silently or with few utterances of letters
- child monitors own writing

Figure 8.2 Phases of interaction

Because the structure and talk cycle pattern are the same throughout the programme, it is easy to miss subtle changes and difficult to illustrate without the wider context of each lesson in relation to the others. Changes occur in the content and the context of talk cycles as the teacher structures the internal setting so that the child independently develops increasingly more complex actions. Extended examples in Extract 8.12 from two of the sub-sample children illuminate this.

Extract 8.12 Illustration of phases of interaction

Example 1: (Child 7)

PHASE 1

T: **Until**, good. before the t, there's an I. Gosh you're writing very small. I **can't wait until** ( ) mmm you can't make your letters tall can you, squashed up against there. Very good, that's nearly **until**. What's the u, another u, you can hear?

C: A, R

T: No, un like up.

C: Uppy Umbrella

T: U, U, until. That's alright. You don't put up there. This is all you need to write. I'll show you. **Until** OK **until**.

(Observation 2)

T: Let's try **outside** in boxes... **Outside** we're writing.

C: How come's there's boxes?

T: 'cos it's for **outside**. **Out side** in there. What can you hear?

C: out t

T: t in there, **side**

C: Has it got a S in?

T: mm here. What else?

C: s I

T: **side**

C: d D

T: Can you hear anything on the end?

C: E

T: Well you can't hear it but you know it's there do you? What might be in there, **out**?

C: a

T: No it's a U, a U in there, a tricky one, you've got to remember in just out. Put **outside** after that and read it back.

C: It, **They think it is going to snow**, going to snow.

T: That's great

C: Is that a new pen?

T: No, I've had this for a while. I just don't use it much. [*writes text*] Long story, good to see. Put your book away while I'm doing this.

(Observation 6)

PHASE 2

C: **He did not like worms and**

T: **And**, OK [*Child changed original **or** to **and***]. I like how you read that back without me having to tell you.

(Observation 9)

C: **They all fell** ( ) **out** [*tries to write*]

T: Good girl ( ) That was a brilliant try. **Out** is quite a difficult word. The beginning is an O and U. What can you hear on the end?

C: A

T: You say the word for me. We're doing, **all fell**

C: **Out** t [*writes T*]

T: Good girl, out. You put that on your book. What's next?

C: **out of**, O F [*writes as says letter names*] **the** [*leads move as wrote **of** independently*]

T: [*C writes **the***] Brilliant, all on your own, well done.

(Observation 11)

PHASE 3

C: Measles. **I had measles on** [*writes as speaks*] Oops!

T: What's wrong there?

C: Wrong way round, that should be the N, that should be the O.

T: That's right. ( ) **On**

(Observation 13)

T: Write your second sentence.

C: [*re-reads first sentence*] **I am going skiing tomorrow**. What was it again?

T: **I like skiing.**

C: I like, like skiing. [*swiftly writes as speaks, without articulating any letter names, or sounding out*] **I like skiing** [*independently re-reads text*]

(Observation 14)

Example 2: (Child 5)

PHASE 1

T: Right, now **gave**

C: g, g

T: That's /right/

C: /A/

T: Now listen, do you remember we were talking about that letter?

C: G

T: Good, g. What was the word we had in that other book, do you remember, g, was it go? Look, go starts with it, girl starts with it. Anything else you can think of, g, g ( )?

C: go

T: Yeh, we said go. OK Don't worry. gave, that starts with it. So, put the G in the front. Right, push your counters in, say it slowly. What's the word going to say?

C: **gave**

T: Right say it slowly.

C: gaaave. F

T: It's not an F, it sounds like it. It's v

C: V

T: F is f and V is v

C: V

T: V. Right now on the end is the letter we don't always hear.

C: E

T: Do you remember we talked about that? Good. Right on the very end, with the v, we don't hear that one. What do you think might go in the middle?

C: O

T: gaaave

C: ga A [*note that C got this **16** turns ago*!]

T: Good boy. This time A says, it doesn't say a, it says A.

(Observation 1)

PHASE 2

[*C and T are constructing the word **little***]

T: Now, wait a minute, let's do it with the counters. You're going to tell me where the T went. Now say the word slowly, push the counters in.

C: **little**

T: **little**

C: t, t [*points*]

T: Try again, you're not doing it slow enough. Say the word a bit more slowly.

C & T: **little**

T: That's it, there are two Ts in there.

C: Like Barry, I mean Barratt [*street name*]

T: You mean there's a t on the end.

C: Two Ts!

T: Yep, good.

(Observation 5)

T: **get**

C: g ( )

T: What letter does it start with, **get**?

C: g G E [*C articulates as writes; knows how to spell word*]

T: Good

C: E T

T: Well done.

(Observation 7)

C: W A S [*articulates letter names as writes independently*]

T: Right, **the book was**

C: **Called**

T: Right, you can do the first part of **called** and we can work on the second part together.

C: ( ) [*writes **call** silently*]

T: Right, **called**, because it's past

C: [*interrupts*] a, E D

T: Oh, good, you're too quick for me.

(Observation 6)

PHASE 3

C: No, I won't have that one [*pen*]

T: Right off you go then, nice and quick.

C: **My** [*says word as writes*] [*Writes next two words silently*]

T: Lovely and quick, wonderful.

(Observation 10)

C: mmm( ) **taking my** [*writes **my***] **r** [*says initial sound, writes rest silently*]

T: Wow

C: Well I'm glad I didn't

T: You did **rabbit** all by yourself

C: I'm glad I didn't put one [*referring to double B*] 'cos I did on the computer

T: Did you?

C: I spelled something else

T: You remembered, no, it's got two Bs in **rabbit**

C: Yeh and Natasha said you done it wrong. I said Oh!

[*Also, illustrates experiential learning; what children bring to the task*]

(Observation 11)

Diversions have already been discussed and these exist throughout each child's programme. The basis of the talk cycle; move, focus, move, continues in all phases, but in Phase 3, the focus part may encompass two, three or more words before a verbal move is made.

Despite having identified a definite shift towards the child's emerging control at Phase 3, writing is always surrounded by talk and retains the interactive structure of teacher question or directive, child response, teacher move previously identified. What evidence is there that Phase 3 shows the child operating independently, particularly as there is always the support of talk? What happens to enable the scaffolded interactions to move from Phase 1 to Phase 3? Examining what the child takes control of and the subsequent adult role showed the following. All aspects identified can be seen in the previous extract illustrating phases of interaction. Children over time primarily take some control of:

1. *Strategy monitoring*: holding the message in working memory and re-reading independently in order to locate the next move
2. *Whole word recall*: identifying the word and writing it immediately without searching or using phonic cues, i.e., applies acquired sight vocabulary
3. *Control of transcriptional features*: self-regulates spacing and handwriting and shows understanding of punctuation
4. *Phonemic segmentation /use of alphabetic knowledge*: where a phoneme is articulated, the child goes straight to the written letter without the need to name that letter before or in the process of writing it, as would have occurred earlier in the child's programme.

Scaffolded interventions in the writing episode show how teachers help children to connect what they know to information they encounter in new experiences. The teacher interacts with the child in a way that supports the extension of concepts and eventually allows the child to make connections for herself. The interaction between child, teacher and text operationalises connective knowledge, as opportunities present themselves, and illustrates how, over time, scaffolded interventions may foster child independence.

In order to identify scaffolded interventions, the interaction between child, teacher and text surrounding a specific learning target were examined. The same learning targets were identified in different observations throughout the programme. Extract 8.13 presents two case studies which illustrate this development. In each case the same knowledge is being successively and successfully operated on by the child. Different words are encountered and the child needs to use connective strategies as she learns to apply a generative rule based on her experience with print and thereby moves from scaffolded support to independent application.

Extract 8.13 Scaffolded Learning: learning that the letter 'Y' is used for words ending with an 'E' sound.

Case Study 1: Child 7

(Observation 3) - **Bobby**

(*T & C have written Bob*)

T: Good, now just a little bit slower b-o-bb-y

C: E

T: It sounds like an E on the end. It's actually a Y. There's a double B next and then there's a Y on the end. You pop the Y on the end of **Bobby**.

(Observation 6) - **monkey**.

(*In the middle of constructing **monkey***)

C: u

T: But it's not that either, it's O

C: m O [*writes*]

T: Can you think what might be on the end?

C: E

T: Yes, E in there

C: **monkey** Y

T: How did you know, or did you just take a guess? What comes in here? [*continue to work on word*]

(Observation 10) - **party.**

[*C gets P R T, articulating by letter name*]

T: Yup, T. Put the T in there. What can you here on the end?

C: E, it's a y [*self-corrects*]

T: That's right a Y. Good girl. You got a lot of that too didn't you?

C: I got all of it.

Case Study 2: Child 6

(Observation 1) - **mummy**

T: We need 2 Ms. One there and a y on the end. Do you know how to write a y? Try it up here. That's an E OK. We said y. Where will it be in this book, alphabet book, whereabouts do you think a y comes. A Y. X Y Z. That one. Will that look right at the end of **mummy**?

C: Yeh

T: Good girl. We need a small one. We write it like the U and round like that. Have a practice OK. And over her, and write the word **mummy** on the board.

[*Teacher tells y ending without explaining. She concentrates on letter identification, letter formation and visual cue (look right)*]

(Observation 3) - **Cindy**

T & C have constructed Cin

T: Say **Cindy**

C: **Cindy** d

T: Where do you think the d might go?

C: There

T: Oh good, quick.

C: E

T: At the end of a word when we have, like **CindE**, we have Y that, with a word like funnE, we put a Y at the end.

C: Oh

T: Aah, if you have a word like runny, what do you put on the end? Runny

C: E

T: It makes an E sound, it's a Y. Good OK.

(Observation 6) - **battery.**

T: Let's have an R then. OK **battery**. What's that on the end.

C: r, E. E

T: OK. On the end of the word sometimes, when we have that E sound, what letter do we put instead of the E? Do you remember? [*C writes without articulating*] That's right, Y.

(Observation 12) - **dirty**

T: In the middle there's D I R **dirty.** What about on the end? Hang on, it's on the end of a word, so what do you need? [*C writes y*] Great. **Dirty**. [*T no longer needs to provide feedback for the y ending*]

The adult role still appears paramount. There is no relaxation of the challenges posed and the teacher is constantly moving to what can be considered as the outer limits of the zone of proximal development.

8.4 Summary

It was found that the proportion of time spent on the writing component of the lesson was reduced over time in Reading Recovery, while sentence length of text increased. Time spent on writing in total was slightly less than half that spent on reading and this proportion remained stable throughout the year.

Teachers were found to generate text and topics 53% of the time when beginning and end of the programme were considered. However, analysis of text generation over time from the sub-sample showed children to achieve this 51% of the time. Children chose to write about their experiences while teachers predominantly focussed on a shared book. Two styles of generating and composing a text were found. These were, sentence fixing and sentence formulating.

In word construction, teachers rarely, and not at all at the end of the programme, wrote for the child. Joint construction of words occurred most often at the beginning of the programme. It was found that children constructed words independently towards the end of their programme.

Analysis of teacher focus revealed that teachers do pay a great deal of attention to handwriting, spacing, punctuation and neatness. By the end of the programme however, only punctuation remained a prominent teacher focus.

Interactive framework analysis revealed a typical tripartite pattern. Talk cycles were identified and types of teacher and child leads were identified, quantified and illustrated. Fine analysis of interaction over time suggested evidence for three phases of scaffolding and aspects of child control and adult role were exemplified.

8.5 Discussion

8.5.1 Introduction

Findings from the analysis of the Reading Recovery writing episode have been presented in Chapter Seven and Eight. Analysis focussed on the surface structure of the lesson and the patterns of interaction therein. This discussion addresses both elements.

8.5.2 External Factors.

This section of the discussion integrates findings from the study concerning the role of writing, text topics and writing focus.

The time and content analysis showed that less time is spent on writing than reading. The interview data in Chapter 6 indicate that children are not as confident in themselves as writers as they are readers. However, children in Reading Recovery make substantial gains in their writing development as shown in Chapter 5.

While the Reading Recovery lesson may not be considered an authentic literacy event, the writing episode uses connected text produced by the child as the vehicle for learning about written language. Lyons, Pinnell and DeFord (1993) state that "...the teacher and child work together to generate a topic for writing" (p. 22). Contrary to their claim, the data indicate that most of the time (53%), the teacher dominates sentence topic generation, rather than 'working together'. 'Working together' as depicted by joint generation, occurred in only 12% of beginning of Reading Recovery programme lessons and in 23.5% of end of Reading Recovery programme lessons. Clay and Cazden (1990) maintain that the child chooses the topic. This was not always the case in this study. It was also found that over time in the programme, teachers generating topics for children occurred less frequently than children setting the topic independently. Joint generation was less frequent than teacher generation. This finding suggests the importance of studying elements over time; it would be necessary to infer teacher domination of what to write about, if the analysis of findings over time had not been conducted.

Connected with this is a finding from Lyons, Pinnell and DeFord (1993), that teachers of children scoring low on discontinuation from Reading Recovery, prompted children most often to write about personal experiences. In the present study, the balance of teacher generated topics was equal between the child's experience and book stimulus at the beginning and end of Reading Recovery. Children predominately used their personal experience.

Topic choice may be less to do with relations between reading and writing as to seeking a shared domain on which to operate. Also, if children are to attain responsibility for generating text, personal experience is bound to be a dominant genre for writing topic. It may also be indicative of the first year of schooling in which genres patterns are established. Children's developmental writing genres move from observation comment (e.g. writing a statement to accompany a picture) to recounting experience. (Cairney, 1992).

Lyons, Pinnell and DeFord (1993) found that teachers with high outcome students prompted for text topic. In this study, teacher-generated topics over time were also mostly book related. Using the texts read as a topic source enables teachers to retain a sense of control, and on some occasions was used as a basis of behaviour or contingency management in order to aid transition from the reading to the writing episode.

The findings from this study illustrated that once the topic content was set and the sentence generated, the writing task involved foci other than the construction of the words in the sentence; features which are often overlooked in Reading Recovery analysis as they do not constitute the central purpose of the task, and are not part of Reading Recovery teacher training. While Sassoon (1990, 1993) shows the importance of teaching letter formation in groups of letter families (regardless of a specific handwriting model or style) Reading Recovery teachers attend to teaching correct letter formation and movement as and when a child makes inappropriate formations within the context of writing a word. The teacher thereby tailors the teaching to each child's individual needs and context. In Reading Recovery handwriting, letter formation and spatial layout occurred in the context of composing connected text, as proposed by Graves (1986). Side-steps to rehearse a letter shape were short and brisk. The

teacher then led the way back to the predominant task in hand. This study showed that the transcriptional features of writing were given high profile by all teachers. Proficiency in spatial layout and handwriting increased, as shown in the achievements of the written examples. By the end of the programme (Time B), teachers had reduced their attention to these features by more than 50%. However, punctuation remained a focus for teachers throughout a child's programme.

While punctuation continued to be a focus for teachers, the data showed that during the programme it became a prompt or feedback issue, rather than a teaching focus. Hence, it may be that the act of writing is an "act of juggling a number of simultaneous constraints rather than a series of discrete stages that add up to a finished product" (Flowers & Hayes, 1980, p.21).

Writing a story in Reading Recovery (invariably a sentence, and no more than two) requires a conjoint focus on the transcriptional features of writing, the development of alphabetic knowledge (Adams, 1990) and a constant retention of the message generated. Teachers direct attention to transcriptional features either by explicit teaching, prompting or reinforcing as shown in the findings. While punctuation was a constant focus in the Reading Recovery lessons, failure to execute it, is not necessarily indicative of a child's neglect or lack of ability; "it may merely reflect an inability to direct cognitive resources to that aspect of writing when it is needed" (Scardamalia & Bereiter, 1983, p. 95). The teacher's role is to scaffold attention to and fro between transcriptional features of writing and the composition itself. This correlates with the writing model presented by Nicholls et al (1985) in which they stress the integration of composition and performance at each level of development, as discussed in Chapter Two.

8.5.3 Internal Factors

This part of the discussion examines how oral language supports the development of written language in the Reading Recovery context.

The previous discussion on the *content* of sentence generation is extended to a discussion of the *process* of generation. These generative styles are then linked to discussion of the interactive framework embracing the concept of scaffolding.

8.5.4 Talk and Sentences

The findings in this study revealed that text composition in Reading Recovery is specifically structured to be more than speech written down. There is a constant struggle in the paradoxical situation where oral language is used to *mediate* and simultaneously to *articulate* that which is to become a written product. As discussed in Chapter Four, Vygotsky (1986) and Kress (1982) highlight that the written and oral modes of speech differ in structure and function. This inevitably resulted in teachers requiring children to use a written structural mode in talk in order to plan a written sentence. Teacher and child do not just establish a topic followed by the child's attempt at free composition. Rather, talk is imperative in the negotiation of the construction of a sentence. Creating a written text did not occur without the creation of an oral text which links child, teacher and topic. Hence, "collaborative text-making enables teachers to lead children towards conventional sentence structures" (Nicholls et al, 1989, p. 37).

Furthermore, the two styles of sentence generation found in the analysis of the episode suggest that success in writing may not be a linear process from speech to written text. In the sentence fixing style the emphasis was on establishing a sentence orally before writing the text. The intensity

with which teachers approach creating a sentence is illustrated in the following extract:

T: Right, now whose party is it?
C: **My**
T: So, how we gonna put that in a sentence?
C: Capital
T: What are you going to write for the next sentence?
C: **My**
T: Well, it's got to make a sentence. **My cousin's**, doesn't make a sentence does it. Tell me the whole, tell me the whole sentence. ( ) Whose party is it?
C: **My cousin's.**
T: So how would you put that in a sentence? ( ) Would it be, **it is my cousin's party**. Come on, you're not thinking. **It**. So what kind of letter are we going to start **it** with?

(Child 5)

Sentence formulating differed from sentence fixing in the constant to and fro between oral-like and text-like speech as the sentence was created during the process of composition. Re-readings and context-based questions ensured the conformity to sentence structure. This question of style appears teacher controlled, but it was not the aim of this study to explore individual differences in teachers' styles. Both styles resulted in sentence completion, both involved variable amounts of time. While sentence formulation would seem a more natural parallel to adult composition, sentence fixing conforms to the Reading Recovery guidelines which stipulate establishing the sentence before writing it (Clay 1985).

Once word awareness is established, children had little difficulty in representing a sentence in spatial terms. This is supported by the finding that by the end of the programme, teacher attention to spatial layout had diminished considerably. Ultimately, as Kress (1982) foresees, writing

involves a "long process of experimentation which leads a child, eventually, to an understanding and mastery of the adult concept of sentence" (p. 70).

8.5.5 Scaffolding Learning

This section develops the previous discussion on sentence generation. The findings illustrated that teachers rarely modelled or acted for the child in joint construction of text, without embedding the action in talk (Action Talk category). The role of talk as mediator as well as sentence articulator proceeded through the programme.

Nearly all sentences whether generated by fixing or formulating involved constant use of verbal interaction, both teacher and child initiated. Only one of the sub-sample children, who in the vast majority of her lessons initiated experience topics, established text-like sentences immediately with little mediation or negotiation. She was also fascinated by punctuation and progressed from full stops and capital letters, to exclamation marks, question marks, commas and speech marks.

For the rest of the sample, mediation was a necessity in joint movement towards written text. Lyons, Pinnell and DeFord (1993) purport that writing is a process of "going from ideas to spoken words to printed messages " (p. 122), which is actually taken directly from Clay (1985. p. 63). This study has revealed the flow of oral language between mediating and articulating and suggests that learning to write may not be a linear transition; "thus, children's language can be seen as a movement back and forth, between oral and written language structures and strategies as a way to develop communicative competence, rather than as a one-way developmental transition from oral to written language" (Farr, 1984, p.5).

Analysis of the data indicates that during the writing of the sentence, predominant interactions are based around word construction, as defined by talk cycles. Lyons, Pinnell and DeFord (1993) documented that teachers of low outcome children did not encourage them to say the word slowly and seldom used the practice page. None of the teachers in this study neglected these procedures. All teachers paid attention to breaking words into phonemes, as research has shown that children who have not yet learned to read have difficulty with tasks in which they have to detect and manipulate phonemes and thereby need some training in the task (Goswami & Bryant, 1990).

By the end of the programme children were writing more words independently than were jointly constructed. The teachers supported word construction by providing contingent assistance, as was illustrated, and required the children to write as much of the text as they could, prompting them to take over more responsibility for the task as their skill and knowledge of the alphabetic system developed. The teacher's questions surrounding joint and child independent word writing draw the child's attention to problem-solving processes and clarify and explain new information encountered. The findings show how the interactive exchanges involve demonstration, direct feedback and shared participation, as described by Rogoff (1986).

However, it could be that what propels the learning forward to enable children to write more text with increasing independence is an outcome of these interactive patterns combined with constant and consistent repetition or rehearsal; directed to orthographic features. This occurs in the interactive diversions or sub-cycles in which attention is often well-defined. Rehearsal is not a feature presented in the scaffolding literature. But if an adult is modelling elements of a task for a child by which the child attains gradual mastery, successive attempts imply rehearsal of those same

elements until independence is achieved, as exemplified originally in Wood, Bruner and Ross (1976).

Rehearsal needs to be illuminated. The data indicate that children rehearse a whole range of processes. In the writing episode, probably more than in the reading episodes, rehearsal predominantly involves knowledge as opposed to strategies. Children rehearse letter formation (knowing where to start) and respond to repeated demands to define the rules of punctuation and apply them. They orally rehearse the sentence to be written in the sentence fixing style of generation. During the lesson they rehearse sight vocabulary (knowing how to write a word) by taking words to fluency, and rehearse learned 'facts' such as the use of the letter 'y' to represent the 'ee' sound at the end of a word. Lyons, Pinnell and DeFord (1993) cite a transcription conforming to the sentence fixing style of generation (pp. 122-123) and explain how the teacher records "approximations that are important to note as signs of the child's development" (p. 123). To master conventional orthography, children in Reading Recovery are taught to consider how a word looks as well as how it sounds.

Opportunities for learning are inextricably intertwined with the context of the writing and occur as a result of flexible teacher decisions as they tailor interaction to each unique situation. The teacher has to work with unplanned opportunities arising from a text that has only just been created; "at this time, teachers are cautioned to observe children closely, watch their eyes and behaviour so as to support the children in doing what they can for themselves, but always to be ready to do for the children that which they cannot do for themselves. The adult judges the complexity of the task in light of the child's participation, moving in and out to assist, participating with the child at points of difficulty, or stepping back as the child negotiates control" (Lyons, Pinnell & DeFord, 1993, p. 123).

Two strategy-based rehearsals were identified from the data. One is a monitoring strategy which is re-reading the sentence in order to monitor independently what is being written and the other is using word comparisons to construct new words. This interactive sub-cycle corresponds to Goswami and Bryant's (1990) studies in which they demonstrate how children use sonnet and rime to make analogies between known and unknown words. Knowledge-based rehearsals require repeated acts in a short time period in order to lead to independent action in subsequent writing contexts. This could include, for example, the rehearsal of spelling a high-frequency word in a manner similar to the look-say-cover-write-check method.

While children can learn to apply the two strategies independently, rehearsal will only occur if directed by the teacher. Word comparison is not always a useful strategy for children to apply independently, as it is only from a literate viewpoint that appropriate comparisons can be made. An example from the data, is a teacher who sought to establish for the child the 'er' pattern at the end of words. The teacher could accept and reject appropriate suggestions from the child if 'collar' or 'doctor' were offered, when comparing to 'dinner', 'father' and so on. But unless the child has the knowledge of these words, she cannot infer correct analogy for herself.

Research by Goswami & Bryant (1990) indicates that the ability to manipulate phonemes seems to develop as a result of learning to write and read and is particularly facilitated by writing instruction. Their studies show how young children are able to represent sound-to-graphic information in writing but found little evidence of this skill in reading. Children are able to categorise alphabetic information and through analogy and association, extend their knowledge about words; "as children write, they form categories of words and when they begin to read they soon

recognise that words in the same categories often have spelling patterns in common and that this spelling sequence represents the common sound. As soon as they realise this, they can make inferences about new words, and they do" (Goswami & Bryant, 1990, p. 147).

There are fewer strategies available for successful writing than there are for reading. Reading offers far more opportunity to predict from available syntactical, visual or phonological cues; the information is already there. Maclure (1986) suggests that it is the interactional strategies adopted by teachers that shape young children's writing. These have been shown to be paramount; but it seems it is also the teacher's prompting for rehearsal and the high frequency of sub-cycles in the early phase that helps propel the learning forward.

Thus, the fact that children do construct more words independently at the end of the programme is possibly a result of both the kind of interactive exchange and the frequent occurrence of rehearsals together with teaching for sound analysis of the alphabetic system, which serve to build children's knowledge base. Moreover, it is the interactive support system itself that prompts children to rehearse.

8.5.6 Scaffolding: The Interactive Framework

Lyons, Pinnell and DeFord (1993) state that "the writing portion of the lesson is highly scaffolded" (p.123). This claim was made without fine analysis of the interactive patterns and so merits investigation as conducted in this study. Initially, the data yielded a picture of the typical tripartite interactive patterns found in schools. There was less evidence of the type of collaborative exchanges between parents and children in early literacy learning experiences, which Lyons and her colleagues maintain the writing episode emulates. However, in such a tutored setting, "given

the asymmetries of power and knowledge...and the adult's pedagogical intentions, it could hardly be otherwise" (Geekie & Raban, 1993, p. 37).

The categories of teacher talk identified from the data give support to Tharp and Gallimore's (1988) theory of teaching and learning. Action talk serves to model strategies or knowledge for the learner. The effectiveness of this in Reading Recovery may be due to the close joint attention achieved in this dyadic situation. Children are motivated to attend to features of print in guided participation. This is more difficult to achieve in small groups or with individual attention within a class setting (Hobsbaum, Peters & Sylva, 1996).

In the present study, Management talk mostly indicated control of on-task behaviour. There were of course many praise utterances, some even elicited from the children themselves as self-assessment emerged, such as "I got most of them right." This talk category parallels Tharp and Gallimore's contingency management. They regard this as essential for moving through the zone of proximal development. In this study, Response and Confirmative talk corresponds with feeding back. These foster opportunities for children to focus on and monitor their actions. The types of Questioning talk and Instructive talk found in this study correspond directly to parallels Tharp and Gallimore's instructing, questioning, and cognitive structuring. The data showed how teachers use questions both to assist and to assess, while integrating with Instructive talk. Together they provide the voiced system which ultimately enables independent action to develop.

Question talk for the purpose of diagnosis was found in the data. These were genuine questions in order to discover a child's knowledge. Clay and Cazden (1990) give a reminder of the role of ongoing teacher assessment and record keeping and state that "daily records ensure that at any one

time the teacher knows exactly what the child can now do independently" (p.213). Yet, as when a child wrote the word 'rabbit' independently as a result of a previous experience at the computer with a peer, there were occasions of genuine teacher surprise. The many opportunities that children have for interacting with print, particularly in British infant schools, suggests that it is not always possible for Reading Recovery teachers to know exactly what a child can do. However, the knowledge that children bring with them to their Reading Recovery lessons is integrated and built on as teachers actively respond to evidence of children's knowledge and learning.

Commentary and Directive talk chiefly serve to cement the episode together and could easily go unclassified if applying theory to the data rather than identifying categories from the data and structuring the findings within the theory.

Although categories of utterances are identified, it is how they are embedded in the dialogic interchange that offers insight into the scaffolded nature of interaction and requires more salient examination. Lyons, Pinnell and DeFord (1993) state that "the teacher asks questions and generally supports the child so that the writing process moves forward and the child is guided towards greater use of his or her own resources and problem solving toward independence in writing" (p. 125). The findings in this study examine the interactive patterns and document exactly how the process moves forward both in the short-term of an episode and the long-term, throughout the programme.

In order to facilitate this discussion, attention is first directed to the findings on talk-cycles incorporating teacher and child moves. The discussion is then broadened to consider the phases identified in the data. Ultimately, consideration is given to whether the interactive process of the

writing episode can be encompassed by the metaphorical term scaffolding, which has dominated much of the recent Reading Recovery literature (Clay & Cazden, 1990; Lyons, Pinnell & DeFord, 1993; DeFord, 1994; Sylva, Hurry & Peters, 1997).

The pattern of interaction showed that constructing a sentence in the writing episode is composed of a series of talk cycles surrounding the construction of each word. These indicate that the content of the cycle may be considered a scaffold if analysed in Bruner's (1976) terms in which the teacher "enters only to assist, making it possible for the child to participate in the learning event" (p. 12). However, the cycles imply purposeful structuring on the teacher's part in order to move learning on both within a cycle and onto the next word. This is not a random, informal occurrence. In this respect, Searle (1984) would argue that this is not scaffolding as the motive for learning has been created rather than cooperatively arising from the child's experience or initiation. However, Reading Recovery can be regarded as providing such a shared motive as all children interviewed in Chapter Five recognised the need and expressed a desire to learn to read and write.

Identifying how teachers lead moves into talk cycles revealed nine different ways. By far the most common move was simply to tell the child the next word they should be focussing on. In fact, teacher strategies for encouraging children to think about the context of their writing, or to nurture memory recall, or to foster independent re-reading strategies, came rather low down the list. The teacher retains control, anticipates word complexity and decides what methods will be used to achieve the written product, instigating rehearsal tangents in sub-cycles for specific learning. such as word comparison. Judgements about the support needed are based on what the teacher knows the child can do, on anticipated word complexity and on where she wants the child to get to. There are no 'Levels' as there

are for reading to guide teacher choice and therefore there are no controls over the words children encounter in the writing episode, and neither should there be (Clay, 1985).

While scaffolding can be applied to learning to read can it be so readily applied to writing? Scaffolded interaction for text reading documented in the research literature (Lyons et al, 1993) allows comparison over time with the *same* text encountered on successive occasions. With writing, the task content is unpredictable and of varying complexity in terms of letter-sound analysis. There are multiple opportunities for teaching and rehearsing, but the task difficulty is constantly being propelled forward. This is very different from scaffolded interactions around successive attempts at the same task as in Wood, Bruner and Ross (1976) where the term originated to describe the process of tutoring as control was gradually handed over to the child, working in the zone of proximal development, until independent problem-solving was achieved. In a set task, it is the teacher's expectations that are raised rather than the task difficulty itself. But in the writing episode not only does the teacher "constantly 'up the ante' by raising her expectations in accordance with her child's developing knowledge and skill" (Geekie & Raban, 1994, p.18), the task itself is unpredictable in content, dynamic in nature and continually involves new, unplanned for material.

The fact that children only verbally lead the move out of a talk cycle when they have written the previous word independently, suggests it is imperative that children rapidly build an ever increasing sight vocabulary if they are to monitor, self regulate and achieve independence in the writing task. In Chapter Five in which classroom writing samples were analysed, all children tended to score low on vocabulary in Phase one. This may be due to their reliance on known words and thus result in the production of repetitive texts. During the year though, the Reading

Recovery children made significant progress in this dimension. This links with the intensity of rehearsal in taking words to fluency in the writing episode. Teachers provide opportunities for children to expand their range of known words which in turn fosters confidence and independence.

The teacher and child moves identified in the talk cycles and the recognition of the potential unpredictability of writing content as opposed to operating on a set task, produce a situation far more complex than that to which scaffolding has previously been applied. However, in its original conception, scaffolding was used to describe parent-child interaction which encompassed a vast range of random, unstructured opportunities as they occurred in everyday, purposeful situations. While it is the teacher who is largely responsible for moving from cycle to cycle throughout the lesson, it may be that the focus parts of a cycle represent scaffolded interaction rather than the episode as a whole; "...the proposition that children's learning can be promoted by an adult who frames and structures input for the child, seems to be as useful in explaining how children learn to write as it is in accounting for the way they learn to talk" (Geekie & Raban, 1994, pp. 66-67).

While the data showed that the structure of interaction in terms of talk cycles remained consistent throughout the programme, phases within the programme were also identified. The data showed how initially teachers in phase 1 monitor and structure the learning within the task. In phase 2 this gives way to children independently identifying their needs, for example by asking, "is there a T there?", rather than needing to be asked "what can you hear there?" Teachers question children to reveal their acquired knowledge at points in word production where the child may have the information stored but needs a prompt or recall cue in order to retrieve and make connections. The child is aware of the goal, there is a shift in control, but the child may not know just how to get there.

The third phase is characterised by the child, having internalised the teacher's prompts and social exchanges, now being able to exercise increasing control over cognitive processes through the use of regulatory language. The teacher's interactions have moved from close intervention to essentially reactive support as the child directs her own writing to a greater and greater extent. At this level it can be seen that the writing episode matures as a result of intricate teacher decisions as they continually operate in the outer boundaries of the child's zone of proximal development. The phases identified and the case studies cited illustrating the development of specific knowledge, indicate that the interactive framework can be conceived as a process of scaffolding learning.

Vygotsky (1978) emphasised not just the children's development of thinking or literacy itself, but the development of this in relation to the social context or organisation of instruction. The phases identified can be embedded in a Vygotskian perspective by which the learner progresses from interpersonal functioning (guided through social interactions) into intra-personal functioning (self guided). This does not occur in a vacuum but in a context of talk which links these interactions and development. Thus, "as knowledge is constructed through social interaction, teaching is the active assistance and guidance of learning processes within socially dynamic activity settings" (DeFord, 1994, p. 34). It is the finding of the presence of phases that indicates learning unfolding through a process of weaving the fabric of written text and oral text together (Tharp & Gallimore, 1988).

Four criteria from Rogoff's (1990) model of apprenticeship for guided participation describe this process. These are:

i) the existence of tacit as well as explicit communication;

ii) the supportive structuring of nascent attempts;

iii) shared problem-solving; and

iv) the transfer of responsibility to novices, as explicated in phase three of this data.

It is the fifth criterion, the importance of routine activities, which adds a further dimension to scaffolded learning in unpredictable, complex and dynamic tasks as opposed to specific, set ones.

Threaded through the data are verbal incidents and independent acts which mark children's adaptation to the structures and routine of the episode which may be unlike anything they encounter in the classroom. Early on in the programme children weave talk into the text fabric as they converse around the generation of a sentence. They learn that they cannot write all they have to say. They learn the procedures within the lesson, being able to place the writing within the whole lesson as indicated by a child's comment "I know. Story time." The use of practice and writing pages is quickly mastered and children use the appropriate one with little guidance. From selecting a pen to sound analysis and word comparison, children eagerly respond to the lesson structures. While the teacher guides the content, the procedure, once established, guides itself. Cazden (1988) suggests that the development of predictable lesson structures enables joint attention to the task to be highly focussed. However, the writing episode is dynamic in nature with no guarantees that word practice or letter writing or any other aspect will take place. Rather, what enables scaffolded learning to occur when the content is so flexible, is the establishment of formats or routines.

Within the structure of the talk cycles identified, teachers construct oral texts which permit the development of new understandings about the nature of the written task. While the procedures of the writing episode are overtly apparent and quickly adopted by the children, the implicit talk cycles are embedded in the ongoing interaction. It is both these levels

which operate the formats of adult-child interaction providing "ready made pieces of meaningful actions on which children can build their further efforts" (Rogoff, 1990, p. 95).

8.6 Conclusion

The findings from this observation study suggest a conceptualisation of learning to write as connective learning surrounded by the ebb and flow of talk. Talk, as Farr (1984) and Dyson (1981) maintain, is an essential vehicle for writing development; the research has "enabled us to see language holistically and as a dynamic movement between oral and literate processes" (Dyson, 1981, p.781). What appears as a string of teacher-child exchanges, unidirectional from speech to print, is in fact a dynamic network of cycles and diversions which foster children's mastery of the processes and knowledge necessary for writing. The teacher continues to contribute in guiding the selection of appropriate information and supporting the child's increasingly independent attempts; the scaffold is not simply removed or faded out as the child's competence grows.

Children achieve accelerated progress through the stages of writing identified in Frith's (1985) and Clay's (1991) models of writing. Clay and Cazden (1990) have considered the concept of scaffolding to children learning to read in the Reading Recovery lesson. In this detailed study, the scaffolding process has been shown to underpin teaching in the writing component of the intervention.

CHAPTER NINE

DRAWING THE STRANDS TOGETHER: RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSIONS

A focus on writing development within the domain of literacy learning is the thread that runs throughout this thesis. Research suggests that readers and writers operate on print on many levels simultaneously. Learning how to attend to and act upon serial order information while maintaining simultaneous hierarchical processing can create difficulties for the young literacy learner (Clay, 1991). Reading Recovery, Clay's early literacy intervention, aims to support children having difficulty after one year at school by developing their problem-solving approach to print. It was proposed that this thesis would offer insights into several areas of literacy learning and instruction related to this programme: a) the development of children's writing abilities in a highly supported context and whether learning is transferred to independent writing contexts; b) the specific literacy knowledge and awareness young children develop during their time in Reading Recovery, and c) the nature of interaction which assists the transition from the oral to the written domain in the writing episode of the lesson.

This final section of the thesis links together the three areas of research conducted. Two comparative studies were presented. One looked at children's writing products and the second investigated children's understandings of the writing and reading process. The third study explored the interactive processes within the writing episode of the Reading Recovery lesson. Each study included a discussion of the research in the chapter. This final chapter briefly draws all of these together and proposes tentative links between the three studies.

The first study, reported in Chapter Five, examined the effectiveness of the teaching of writing in Reading Recovery lessons as manifest in children's independent writing. Statistical analyses on a five dimensional rating scale clearly indicated Reading Recovery children's improvement in the dimensions of writing assessed in contrast with a matched group of children. Differences were particularly significant in the children's grasp of directional principles, vocabulary and spelling development. This study of children's writing products also showed that Reading Recovery children not only made significant progress in their writing but had generalised their skills to independent writing in the classroom context. Studies with larger samples and a more clearly defined genre for independent writing would be necessary to allow greater generalisations about writing abilities and Reading Recovery.

Interviews with children in Reading Recovery and a matched comparison group of children (Chapter Six) indicated many similarities in their views about writing and reading and in the literacy environments in which they live and learn. However, evidence from the data indicated that Reading Recovery children seemed to have a greater metalinguistic understanding of the processes involved in learning to write and read. Furthermore, the strongest difference was in their ability to talk about phonological and alphabetical features of print. This links with the writing product study (Chapter Five) and the observation study (Chapters Seven and Eight). Most Reading Recovery children were able to talk about print clearly and with sophistication. They therefore have a more in-depth knowledge on which to draw when writing in less well-supported situations. Their understanding is reflected in the attainments made in independent writing as discussed in Chapter Five.

Learning to write in the Reading Recovery context involves attending to the structures of written language while attending to the purposes and content of the writing. The transcriptional features of writing are taught while writing connected text. Observations of the lessons indicate conjoint attention to features of writing, dealing with several levels of the process simultaneously while occasionally side-stepping to focus temporarily on teacher instruction of a particular aspect, such as letter formation or phonemic segmentation. Moore and Wade (1993) found that children who had received Reading Recovery performed very highly on assessment of writing quality. They suggest that this outcome was "influenced by the writing component of earlier Reading Recovery sessions which focused on the sense of what is being written...and which drew attention to sounds and patterns within written words used in context of communicating meaning" (p. 21). This process may partially explain Reading Recovery children's achievements in independent writing and their knowledge of and ability to explicate features of the alphabetic system as presented in Chapters Five and Six.

The observation study, which examined the interactive processes of the writing element of Reading Recovery lessons, identified teacher talk categories and how the compositional and transcriptional aspects of writing were taught; discovered two ways in which teachers and children use talk to establish sentences for writing; and investigated the interactive structure, proposing a model of a talk cycle which propels the learning forward. Qualitative analysis revealed how children were involved in the learning and ways in which they were able to take control over the writing process. Ways in which teachers and children lead the interaction were also identified. It may be that the superior attainment and metalinguistic awareness achieved by Reading Recovery children are a possible outcome of the teaching within Reading Recovery lessons.

Observations of the writing episode revealed that children are not skill trained but initiated into a process. A Reading Recovery model of teaching is not a didactic transmission of pre-formulated knowledge but an attempt to guide the mental structures of the learner dealing with the multi-level task of writing. This environment is necessary for learning to occur in a way which nurtures a self-extending system and in such a way that "if children are to maintain an active, self-directed and self-generated approach to learning, then it is vitally important that conditions are such that they can get hold of the problems they encounter" (Francis, 1985, p. 104). Teaching reading in Reading Recovery lessons is strategy based and trains children to use and monitor all available print cues. It was proposed that this could be more difficult for the teaching of writing as it involves the creation of text rather than operating on existing print. However, it seems that the teaching of writing in Reading Recovery lessons capitalises on problem-solving methods. Incidental learning pays dividends alongside direct teaching involving practice with principles of the English orthographic system.

The teacher's role of anticipating and supporting whatever is currently difficult for the child was discussed in Chapter Eight using the framework of scaffolding. This process enables children to connect what they know to new information encountered, enabling them to develop a network of skills for managing the compositional and transcriptional elements of writing and simultaneously promoting independence in writing. While the participants in this particular context are essential to the nature of interaction described, it may be that the scaffolded interaction is neither controlled by the teacher nor built by the child but an outcome of programme design and methods stipulated. Further research could examine whether the interactive model proposed here is evident in other literacy programmes.

Research reported in Chapter Three has shown that Reading Recovery does achieve accelerated literacy progress. The research reported here has suggested that these achievements in writing are not just evident from outcome scores that test what has been taught, but that transference to classroom writing does occur, enabling access to the broader curriculum on offer. While there are many avenues for analysis, the qualitative exploration of the nature of the writing episode, has described the interactive framework that enables such progress to occur.

Each chapter has contained its own criticisms and discussion. Possible avenues for further research have also been suggested within these studies. This thesis has expanded the range of research on Reading Recovery to date. The DfEE (1997) identified a strategic problem with the implementation of Reading Recovery in this country in that it was "introduced independently of any coherent attempt to ensure that the vast majority of children learnt to read quickly and effectively through being taught in the best possible way" (p. 30). The report argues that Reading Recovery cannot yet play the part it was designed to play in New Zealand's comprehensive system. The recent introduction of the National Literacy Strategy (DfEE, 1987) is intended to strengthen the classroom teaching of literacy throughout the primary school in a way which should ensure that there is closer compatibility between approaches used in the classroom and those in Reading Recovery.

What is needed is research that examines congruency of this programme with British classrooms in a similar way to Johnston, Allington and Afflerbach (1985) and Allington, Steutzel, Shake and Lamarche (1986). Clay (1993a) stresses that Reading Recovery is compatible with any classroom programme. However, opportunity for children to use and extend their newly acquired skills in independent contexts as examined in

Chapter Five, may be hindered or enhanced depending on the type of classroom programme. Gardner et al (1996) found that many children in their study or Reading Recovery in Northern Ireland were not able to capitalise on their Reading Recovery achievements in the classroom programme. Further research along these lines could examine how the specific gains made in children's writing development as shown in Chapter Five can best be built on in particular classroom contexts. Related to this, Shanahan and Barr (1995), in their evaluation of Reading Recovery, suggest that it would not be expected that Reading Recovery would have a systemic effect on classroom programmes. They claim that Clay (1993a) would not expect a direct influence from Reading Recovery on classroom teaching. Future research could explore the extent to which Reading Recovery practice may permeate classroom approaches to teaching writing. Johnston et al (1985) and Allington et al (1986) looked at content congruency. Research also needs to explore the process.

Links between reading and writing development within the Reading Recovery lesson could also be explored and would be consistent with the research accruing on both processes of literacy learning. In line with Frith's (1985) model of literacy development and the observation study presented in Chapters Seven and Eight, research could profitably explore the reciprocity between reading and writing in the programme by looking at the interactive patterns which teach children to connect their writing and reading knowledge. It would be useful to examine at what points of the lesson or the programme the separate systems of knowledge contribute to the development of each other and how this can best be facilitated.

It has been suggested that learning to write is most effective when embedded within teacher/child talk and the prominence of oral language has been highlighted. Thus, "learning is mediated through complex interactive and interpretive processes, and whether learning takes place is

a function of the way an activity is structured, and the amount and quality of contact, instruction and practice" (Michaels & Cazden, 1986, p.151). The writing episode in Reading Recovery appears to provide just that by specifically attending to the phonology, syntax and the alphabetic system of English written language. Furthermore, it does so in a structured setting which operates on and integrates all levels of production from phonemes to word level and sentence level in order to enable children to produce accurate, legible, connected text.

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APPENDICES

Appendix I Covering Letters

11 Carhalton Grove
Sutton
Surrey SM1 4LY

4 February 1992

MS E Powell
Chief Educational Psychologist
Wandsworth Borough Council
Education Department
School Division
PO Box 234
London SW18 1DD

Dear Ms Powell

I am a research student at the Institute of Education, London University, and am also currently employed by Wandsworth as a supply teacher. I am writing to you with respect to my research area, that of Reading Recovery. I understand that Wandsworth is one of the education councils developing this programme.

I would like to establish some initial links with particular schools, headteachers and teachers taking part in this programme. My purposes at the present time are to carry out some preliminary observations and/or audio-taping of Reading Recovery sessions. Professor Kathy Sylva and Professor Marie Clay are helping to supervise this research.

Perhaps it would be possible to meet with you, or if you think there are particular schools that might be congenial to my research involvement, to inform me of these, and I will make my own contacts as necessary.

I look forward to hearing from you concerning this research project.

Thank-you.

Yours sincerely

Sandra J Peters. B.Ed., M.A.

Department of Child Development and Primary Education

Chair Angela Hobsbaum
Professor Kathy Sylva

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Director SIR PETER NEWSAM
Deputy Director PROFESSOR PETER MORTIMORE

26 March 1992

Ms Anna Wright
Chief Educational Psychologist
County Hall, Penrhyn Road
Kingston upon Thames
Surrey

Dear Ms Wright

I write in hopes that you will be willing to help Mrs Sandra Peters in her Ph.D. research on Reading Recovery. As you know the London Institute of Education is seeking funds to carry out a large-scale evaluation of the Reading Recovery Programme in at least ten LEAs. Mrs. Peters work will dovetail with this, but is oriented towards the process of Reading Recovery rather than its outcome. For this reason, the implications of her research will be useful in understanding the interactive components which make the programme 'work'.

To this end she would like to observe Reading Recovery sessions in several schools to develop a non-intrusive method for recording (and later analysing) the interaction between teacher and child.

Mrs Peters is a trained teacher with previous primary posts in Wandsworth. She would accommodate her schedule to any teachers prepared to allow her to observe during the one-to-one sessions.

What she needs at present is NOT a large group of teachers with whom to work but rather 4-5 teachers who would be interested in allowing her to watch them. (If they wanted to talk to her about their work, that would be an added bonus.)

I hope that you and your colleagues will be interested in collaborating on this interesting and potentially useful research.

Yours sincerely

Kathy Sylva
Professor Child Development and Primary Education

11 Carshalton Grove
Sutton
Surrey SM1 4LY

081 643-9132

25 March 1992

Ms Anna Wright
Chief Educational Psychologist
County Hall
Penrhyn Road
Kingston Upon Thames
Surrey

Dear Ms Wright

Further to our telephone conversation on Wednesday, I enclose the following information. I am a research student at the Institute of Education, London University, and am also currently employed by Sutton and Wandsworth as a supply teacher. I am writing to you with respect to my research area, that of Reading Recovery. Professor Marie Clay and Professor Kathy Sylva are supervising this research.

I understand that Surrey is one of the education councils operating this programme. I am seeking to establish some initial links with particular schools, headteachers and teachers taking part in this programme. My purposes at the present time are to carry out some preliminary observations and/or audio-taping of Reading Recovery sessions.

Firstly I would like to know if there are teachers willing to participate in this research and of course whether you will give it the go-ahead. All I really need in the immediate future is the opportunity to do some observations. I think about four or five different children, but not necessarily all with different teachers. I am available at any time and on any day, and would like access as soon as possible and as soon as is convenient to the participants. Perhaps it would be possible to discuss this with you, or if you think there are particular schools that might be amenable to my research involvement, to inform me of these, and I will make my own contacts as necessary.

In the long term, probably commencing Autumn 1992 or the end of this summer term depending on where children are at with their programmes, I will be needing about 20 - 30 children, but this may be shared with Wandsworth. My research focus is the process of Reading Recovery and the interaction between child, text and teacher. I may select four or five of these children for more frequent observation. I will also be looking at writing development. For this I am hoping to gain access to children on the Reading Recovery waiting list but who

will not actually be admitted by the time the one cohort I am studying has finished. This can be explained more clearly if we meet to discuss the research plan. Numbers and plans cannot be finalized until I have conducted the initial observations to help clarify my research intent and procedure. So I realize this may be a little unclear at the moment, but hope it gives you a picture of what I will require.

Publications are unlikely to occur within the next two to three years, but I will supply all cooperating Reading Recovery teachers and class teachers with a research outline and they will be informed of any outcomes or analyses.

I hope this is detailed enough for you at the present time and I look forward to hearing from you concerning this research project.

Thank-you.

Yours sincerely

Sandra J Peters. B.Ed., M.A.

11 Carshalton Grove
Sutton
Surrey SM1 4LY

081 643-9132

13 July 1992

Dear Ms Evans

I expect you are very busy now at the end of term and I understand that you are away at the moment, so I thought it best to write you a short note. Thank-you very much for allowing me to observe and to learn more about Reading Recovery in operation a few weeks ago.

I am very keen to know as soon as possible as to whether you and your colleague, Sarah, will be able to take part in my study commencing hopefully in September. Anna Wright is in the process of supplying me with another Surrey school as well. I do hope that you will be able to help and that I will not intrude too much on your everyday working life. I set out a written reminder of what I will be hoping to do.

-access to 8 Reading Recovery children
-these 8 children to be observed twice only at set levels
-one interview with each child
-photocopies of written work where observed
-possibly some samples of written work from the classroom (preferably unaided)
-the sessions observed may be recorded if permission is given from Anna or Jean and of course yourselves

I hope this is helpful to you. I will not be needing a group of children experiencing difficulties who do not receive Reading Recovery. I would like to hear from you as soon as possible as to whether you can participate. However, I will be away during your last week of term when you return. So perhaps you could call me as soon after that as possible.

Thank-you once again for your help. I look forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely

Sandra Peters
(University of London student)

Appendix II Rating Scale for Writing Assessment

RATING SCALE FOR ASSESSING WRITING SAMPLES

	1	2	3	4	5	6
LANGUAGE LEVEL	random string symbols	alphabetic symbols for sounds	recognisable word	word group (or 2-word phrase)	sentence (simple)	punctuated story (2 or more sentences)
MESSAGE QUALITY	concept of signs	concept message is conveyed	message copied	repetitive sentence patterns	records own ideas	successful composition
DIRECTIONAL PRINCIPLES	no evidence	part known L-R	reversal consistent	correct directional pattern	correct directional pattern and spaces	text spaced & arranged
VOCABULARY	basic	simple	repetitive	descriptive	interest	text-like
SPELLING STRATEGY	none	initial letter	boundary sounds	partial sequential	sequential	correct mapping

Appendix III Interview Schedule

INTERVIEW STEM QUESTIONS

PART I READING

A. *Child's views on own reading*

1. Do you like reading?
   Why do you like to read/ What do you like about it?
2. Do you think you are a good reader?
   What makes you think that/ How do you know?
3. If you read something really well is it because
   a) you are good at it
   b) somebody helped you
   c) just lucky that time?
   d) any other reason (e.g, easy book)

Two scenarios given:

a) [Reading Recovery sample only] If you read your new book that you had yesterday really well to your teacher, would that be because...

b) [Reading Recovery and Comparison group] If you could choose any book out of your box here and read to me now and you read it really well, would that be because...

4. Do you prefer to read quietly to yourself or to read aloud to someone? Why is that?
5. Do you read a lot at home? More than at school? Why?
6. Do the people at home read much? What sort of things do they read?

B. *Child's views of reading difficulties*

(Child brings choice of books)

1. Why did you choose this book to show me?
2. Is it a difficult/hard book or is it an easy one? Why?
3. Find me a hard/easy book (i.e. opposite of book chose for previous question). What makes this book difficult/easy?
4. Show me a difficult word. What makes it hard?

5. Show me an easy word. What makes it easy?
6. If you come to a word you don't know when you are reading by yourself, what do you do?

   a) at home b) at school
7. When you are reading and you come to a word you don't know, would you ever?:

   a) miss it out

   b) turn the page

   c) sound it out

   d) re-read a little bit

   e) change the book

   f) ask someone

   g) look at the pictures
8. What do you have to know or be able to do to be a good reader?

C. *The purpose of reading*

1. Do you think children should learn to read? Why/why not?

PART II WRITING

A. *Child's view on own writing*

1. Do you like writing? Why do you like/not like to write?
2. Do you think you are a good writer?

   What makes you think that/ how do you know?

3 What do you have to know/ be able to do to be a good writer?

4. Do you write much at home? More than at school? Why?
5. What sort of things do you like to write?
6. Do people at home write much? What sort of things?

B. *Child's view on writing difficulties*

(Child brings writing samples/book)

1. Show me a piece of writing that you found hard to write.

   What was hard about it?

   Show me a piece of writing that you found easy to write.

   Why was it easy?

2. What do you find difficult about writing?

   a) handwriting b) spelling c) thinking of ideas

3. What do you do if you want to write something but you don't know how to spell it? a) at home? b) at school?

4. If you want to write a word and you don't know how to spell it would you ever?

   a) try it/sound it out

   b) look in a word book or dictionary

   c) look around the classroom/environment

   d) ask someone

C. *The purpose of writing*

1. Do you think children should learn to write? Why/ why not?

PART III READING RECOVERY

1. Do you know why you have these special lessons every day?
2. Remind the child of each part of the lesson. Which bit do you like best? Why?
3. Which bit do you not like? Why?
4. Do you prefer writing in the classroom or in Reading Recovery? Why?
5. Do you prefer reading in the classroom or in Reading Recovery? Why?

Appendix IV Transcription Conventions

Transcription Conventions

SPEAKER

(1) The letter T followed by a colon, indicates teacher.

(2) The letter C followed by a colon, indicates child.

(3) All names have been changed, where used in the dialogue.

(4) The letter I followed by a colon, indicates interviewer.

SEQUENCING

(1) /text/ indicates overlap of a few words between two speakers.

(2) ( ) indicates a pause of 3 seconds or more.

(3) (inaud) indicates that speech was unclear on the audio-tape and not possible to transcribe accurately.

(4) Each speaker turn starts on a new line.

TEXT UTTERANCES

(1) Regular upper and lower case type are used to indicate speech and text.

(2) An UPPER CASE letter or groups of letters indicate the letter *name* is uttered.

(3) A lower case letter or groups of letters indicate the letter *sound* is uttered.

SOUND PRODUCTION Not all inflections were transcribed but the following conventions are noted.

(1) Underscoring indicates emphasis placed on the underscored word or part of a word.

(2) UPPERCASE words or phrases indicate words emphasised with increase in volume.

ADDITIONAL CONVENTIONS

(1) (TEXT) or print in **bold** indicates text from a book or written text.

(2) (laughs), comments in parentheses are used to provide descriptive information.

(3) [*comment*], comments in italics and box parentheses are used to provide additional detailed information.